

ОБЩЕСТВЕННАЯ АКАДЕМИЯ ЭСТЕТИКИ И СВОБОДНЫХ ИСКУССТВ

БИБЛИОТЕКА АКАДЕМИИ



YURI BOREV

AESTHETICS
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YURI BOREV

AESTHETICS

PREFACE

In our dynamic age, the advance of science is indeed rapid. Life itself urges scholars to look into new problems, suggests new themes and necessitates new approaches and methods of research. Aesthetics is no exception.

Each part of the present book considers an individual aspect of man's aesthetic activity and art and at the same time defines this aspect, so that, taken as a whole, the titles of the parts both add up to a detailed definition of the subject of aesthetics and give the reader an idea of the content of the book. The range of issues treated by aesthetics is constantly expanding, and its subject is continually acquiring new facets. The author touches on some of the questions which have hitherto received little special attention.

The book is addressed to a thinking, interested and creative audience. Readers with no previous knowledge of the subject may find it difficult in places. But any science at the modern stage of its development is not easy to master.

If this book brings back to the reader his encounters with art, and if art and the beauty of life make him think about this book, the author will know his work has not been in vain.

INTRODUCTION

Aesthetics as a Scientific Discipline

What Does Aesthetics Study? (Aesthetics in Its Relationship to the World)

The unknown author of the *Treatise On the Sublime* written centuries ago said that each branch of knowledge must meet two requirements. "In the treating of any Art, Two Things are requisite; One, to explain and define what we treat upon; the Other, tho' not in Order, yet in Virtue the principal, to point out, how and by what Methods that Art may be acquir'd."¹ Though basically correct, this idea needs to be amplified: the subject should be studied in connection with the purpose of the science, and the means (method) of its study should be linked to its system. Each science has its own subject. To define it means to define the specific features, area of operation and the goals of the science. Unfortunately, it is not very easy to give a concise definition of the subject-matter of aesthetics.

Discussing logic, Hegel noted, very justly, that it cannot say in advance what it is, and only an entire exposition of it produces this knowledge. The same is true of aesthetics: only a detailed account of this branch of knowledge can give an accurate idea of its boundaries. But the author still thinks that an account of aesthetics should be prefaced by a preliminary definition of its subject.

Aesthetics has a long history. In the course of its development, not only aesthetic views changed but also the range of questions it embraces, its subject and its purpose. The Greek natural philosophers and the Pythagoreans viewed it as part of philosophy which served to present a picture of the world *in toto*; later, it concerned itself with poetics and the nature of beauty and art and tried to sum up the experience of the latter (Aristotle); to this range of questions, Plato added those of state control over art and the part played by the latter in educating man; at one time, aesthetics bordered on ethics (Socrates); it was a division of theology seeking, with the help of art, to induce man to serve god (Tertullian, Thomas Aquinas); it examined the relationship of nature and art (Leonardo da Vinci); it attempted to set standards for art (Boileau); it analysed the sensual cognition of the world through art (Baumgarten); it confined itself to the realm of the beautiful or, to be more precise, *art*, and not just any art but the *beautiful in art* only, its goal being to define the place of art in the overall system of the Universal Spirit (Hegel); it aspired to embrace the whole range of aesthetic relationships

between man and existence (Chernyshevsky); it sought to supply individual artistic trends with a theoretical foundation, e.g. romanticism (Novalis) and realism (Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky) and theoretically pin down the practice of art (neopositivists).

Marxist aesthetics theoretically interprets the aesthetic aspects of the cognition of the world in each field of human activity, including art, where it seeks to enhance the social role of art, which can be done if its nature is understood better.

How, then, do we understand the subject of aesthetics as a branch of knowledge? Each science is concerned not with a separate group of phenomena but *the whole world seen from a certain angle*, all phenomena interpreted from the point of view of the purpose of a given science. For instance, it would be incorrect to say that medicine deals with man's health; health is the goal of medicine, while its subject embraces the sun, the natural environment, chemical substances and physical phenomena as they affect man's health. The subject of aesthetics is also the world in its entirety considered from the point of view of its value for man.

Aesthetics is that branch of knowledge which deals with the historically determined essence of human values, their creation, perception, appreciation and assimilation. It is a philosophical science concerned with the most general principles of aesthetic cognition of the world through any human activity, especially art, which formulates, confirms and perfects the results of this cognition according to the laws of the beautiful.

The nature of the aesthetic and its many forms in life and art, the principles of man's aesthetic approach to the world, the essence and laws of art – these are the chief questions aesthetics deals with. It moulds the system of aesthetic views of a society which leave their stamp on the entire material and cultural activity of man.

Who Needs Aesthetics and What for?

(The Relation of Aesthetics to the Artist and the Public)

Aesthetic studies are frequently scorned as unworthy of a serious-minded person with practical goals in view. Indeed, who needs aesthetics and what for? On superficial consideration, not even the artist. Like Moliere's Jourdain, who, waking up one fine morning, discovered that he had been speaking prose all his life, a poet may discover unexpectedly that he has always been guided by aesthetic laws being totally unaware of their existence and nature. But does this mean that aesthetics is useless? Not at all.

The artist does need aesthetics. True, he may have no theoretical knowledge in the field and apply aesthetic laws intuitively drawing them from his own work and the work of his predecessors and contemporaries. But the knowledge which has not been reinforced by theory may not always be sufficient for finding an adequate solution to a problem.

When the artist comes up against a difficult creative task, or wishes to assess his own work, or sets himself fresh goals or tries to find a way out of a crisis, he cannot be guided by intuition alone but would be better served to rely on a knowledge of aesthetics.

There is often an enormous difference between the first and the final version of a genuine work of art. Sometimes it is hard to believe that the same person produced both.

Why is it that not everyone succeeds in turning a sketch or an outline into a work of art? To begin with, not everyone is capable of sustained effort in polishing the work which may take years, as did the picture of the Russian painter Alexander Ivanov *The Appearance of Christ to the People*, or Lev Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace*, parts of which he rewrote dozens of times. Not everyone can work like Ilya Repin who went on painting even after his right arm began to shrink, or like Beethoven, who continued to write music even having become deaf. Creation of a masterpiece involves a titanic effort.

Art is impossible without consummate skill, high self-standards, persistence, hard work and talent. But all these essential and indispensable qualities are worthless if there is no artistic conception of the world, an individual world outlook and a harmonious system of aesthetic principles translated into images. An artist's world outlook does not amount to a sum total of borrowed philosophic truths but is born of life itself – observation of nature and society, assimilation of human culture, and an active approach to the world. The world outlook not only guides talent and skill but is itself shaped under their influence in the process of creation. An individual vision of the world and the selection of material are determined and regulated by the world outlook. The act of creation is affected most directly by that aspect of the world outlook which is expressed in *the aesthetic system* realised through the imagination, whether consciously or intuitively.

As a rule, the act of creation and the understanding of its laws go hand in hand. Aristophanes, Leonardo da Vinci, Shakespeare, Moliere, Goethe, Schiller, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky were not only great artists but also great explorers of the secrets of art.

In the course of its history, aesthetics has repeatedly debated the usefulness of

theory to the artist. In antiquity, Pindar contrasted the learned rhymster with the born poet. Plato's approach was more profound and flexible:

he considered it necessary to have both talent, training and theoretical knowledge. In his treatise *On the Sublime* Pseudo-Longinus propounded the view that the merits of an artist's work are determined more by the power of his talent than his knowledge of the rules. However, he admitted that genuine art was impossible without theory, that talent withered away if it did not constantly seek perfection, and that science directed and polished the genius helping him avoid mistakes.

True, aesthetics is not directly utilitarian – The knowledge of its basic tenets does not necessarily teach creation according to the laws of beauty and *vice versa*.

We manage to think logically without a knowledge of the subject. However, a study of the laws behind a process, even if not immediately utilitarian, has a profound *practical importance*. Acquaintance with the laws of logic allows us not only to consciously build a chain of thought but to scientifically test their accuracy and strength, to find the place where the chain has been broken and to supply the missing link. In the same way a knowledge of aesthetics affects the artist's work, if only indirectly, helping him to develop a conscious approach to creative activity which would combine talent and craftsmanship. Aesthetics is equally important to the people who are on the receiving end of art. A theoretically advanced consciousness is better able to appreciate a work of art.

It is conceivable that while reading, one may derive satisfaction from building words from letters, or enjoy stylistic embellishments or a gripping plot, but true appreciation of art implies the ability to grasp the artist's intention and understand his imagery, and aesthetics can do a great deal towards developing this ability.

Art is the source of one of the most sublime spiritual experiences-aesthetic delight. This is exactly what Alexander Pushkin meant when he wrote, "I want to be ... drunk with sweet harmony, touch fancy's strings And freely weep o'er its imaginings..."²

Aesthetics is essential for developing a taste in art and therefore for true appreciation of art.

Sooner or later both the artist and the intelligent reader or spectator will ask himself: "What is the essence of art, its laws, the nature of the beautiful, the sublime, the tragic, the comic? What is the role of the artistic image and the method of creative work, the distinctive features of literature, theatre, cinema

and other arts?" The only way to tackle these problems is to approach art as an integrated system.

Moreover, it is not only a painter who needs aesthetics but also a tailor, a joiner, an engineer, since for them, one of the ways to understand the world is through the laws of beauty. Aesthetics finds its way into the work, everyday life and consciousness of our contemporaries helping them to develop the creative potential each person possesses.

Is Aesthetics a Normative Science?

(The Relationship Between Aesthetics and the Act of Creation)

In the course of the history of aesthetics, two extreme positions have been evolved on the question of its relation to art: empiricism and a trend that exaggerates its normative role.

Boileau, the theorist of neo-classicism, saw aesthetics as a science dictating to the artist the norms and rules derived from philosophy and politics. Another French art critic, Hippolyte Taine, who lived in the 19th century, maintained, on the contrary, that aesthetics should trace the facts of art and pin them down. Both extremes are equally unacceptable for modern aesthetics.

As Vissarion Belinsky, the 19th-century Russian literary critic, wrote, "Aesthetics should not regard art as something thought up, an ideal which can be made real only through

aesthetic theory; no, it should view art as a phenomenon which has long preceded it and which has brought it into being."³

Aesthetics does not exist to act as a check upon creative assumes this function when it throws light on the inner laws and historically unique qualities of art. The norms it introduces are neither more nor less obligatory for the artist than the norms introduced by The Law of Archimedes for somebody who intends to go sailing. The latter can go on the sea, river or lake in a boat, a steamer, or on a raft, but he cannot use an object whose specific weight exceeds that of water. To this extent, The Law of Archimedes is normative, and breaking it is fraught with danger. The artist is free in his choice of the subject, genre and form of poetic expression, but he cannot dismiss the laws of creative activity. Neglect of aesthetic norms will prevent him from carrying out his intention and may even land him outside the boundaries of art.

Aesthetics is normative in so far as it sums up the laws evolved by art itself. Its conclusions have the force of objective laws, and if they are disregarded, a departure from the nature and purpose of art is imminent.

However, the historical laws of art are not absolute either. Jean Georges Noverre, the founder of ballet performance, the "Shakespeare of the dance", as his contemporaries called him, said, "The rules are all very well up to a certain limit... One should be able to follow them, but also to reject them and take them up again... Woe to the impassive artist clinging to the narrow regulations of his art..."

Beethoven's work is an instance of a radical departure from accepted standards: his music was so unlike anything typical for his time that contemporaries considered him insane.

A great artist oversteps the established boundaries of creative activity. But he cannot break all the laws. Rather, he modifies them in accordance with the changed situation and the newly accumulated experience, and very often the changes he introduces are quite substantial. But his reformism is rooted in tradition, i.e. something that has been retained for centuries. Aesthetics sums up the experience of art and provides a theoretical substantiation and support for everything in it which is truly novel.

Aesthetics bases its conclusions on practical activities in art and its interpretation by history, the theory of art and art criticism. It concentrates on the concrete and the universal, i.e. not empty abstractions but the generalizations which have absorbed the experience of world art.

¹ *Epistles, Odes, Written on Several Subjects with A Translation of Longinus's Treatise On the Sublime* by Mr. Welsted, London, p.142.

² "Elegy", an excerpt. Translated by Irina Zheleznova – Ed.

³ V.G. Belinsky, *Complete Works*, Moscow, 1955, Vol. 6, p.585 (in Russian).

INTRODUCTION

Aesthetics as a Scientific Discipline

A Science is a System

The problem of the truly scientific nature of modern aesthetics is cardinal. One can hardly regard as a contribution to it the innumerable theoretical essays following the pattern of "Reflections Concerning...", which should really be taken to mean and have a subtitle "My Taste in Art". A noted American art critic Thomas Munro called one of his books *Toward Science in Aesthetics*¹.

Fed up with impotent efforts, the author longs for a truly scientific approach taking issue with those who think that science is dreary and that it kills everything it touches. According to Munro, the scientific approach implies observing and classifying facts and evolving general laws.

But even a great number of correct observations, classified facts and established laws, even brought together, do not add up to a science, just as a pile of bricks, even sorted out according to size, is not a building. Science is not a collection of truths, facts, observations or ideas. Science is knowledge organised in a certain way and subordinated to social practice.

A science is a system which has the following essential characteristics:

1. A logical connection and subordination, a hierarchy of concepts, categories and laws and a specific order of ideas. A scientific problem in aesthetics can be solved only if it is tied up with adjacent problems and dealt with as part of an overall system and with the help of a single set of methods.
2. A system is an organised (orderly) multitude consisting of separate elements but not reducible to their simple sum.

Aesthetics is a system of laws and categories which give a theoretical description of the world in its great diversity and value to mankind, an artistic cognition of this world, creative activity according to the laws of the beautiful, the substance of art, features of its development, specifics of creativity, perception and social functioning of culture.

3. Concrete and universal ideas interlinked in the scientific system, the ability not to simply accumulate and relate the facts but rise over them and get a bird's-eye view of them. A scientific system always disengages itself from facts putting them only to indirect use. In this sense, aesthetics bases its theoretical generalisations on the infinite realm of the practical and artistic cognition of the world according to the laws of the beautiful.

4. Monism, i.e. proceeding from the same initial positions when interpreting

all phenomena. The significance of Mendeleyev's discovery in chemistry lies in the fact that the knowledge of the subject was supplemented without any additional research but only by organising the accumulated knowledge into a system based on a single principle. Such single basis for a systematic organization of knowledge in aesthetics is provided by the interpretation of the aesthetic as the universally valuable.

5. A major feature of a scientific system is the absence of anything superfluous (the principle of minimum sufficiency). The minimum number of axioms or other points of departure should encourage such evolution of ideas which would enable them to embrace the maximum number of facts and phenomena. This lends logical elegance and beauty to a scientific system. In this respect, aesthetics may borrow the experience of physics in its movement towards the theory of relativity. Einstein said that initial hypotheses are becoming ever more abstract and removed from life experience. Yet we are coming ever nearer to the lofty scientific purpose: to embrace, through logical deduction, the maximum number of facts of life while basing on the minimum number of hypotheses and axioms.

6. Inherent in a scientific system are openness and readiness to take in and theoretically "process" hitherto unknown facts and phenomena. The possibilities of aesthetic cognition of the world are boundless; therefore, a closed aesthetic system is necessarily faulty. Only a system built on a monist basis, open to all new facts and not claiming to be absolutely complete but seeking to assimilate all the entire historical experience of mankind and to meet the requirements of the day, a system which is capable of growing, filling its own gaps and embracing new ideas, only such a system can be fruitful and promising. Aesthetics crystallises the experience of man's artistic development, which is infinite.

When in flight, an aircraft is both supported by air and has to overcome its resistance. That is the way for aesthetic thought to approach the facts of art. Facts are the air of science, and thought, its wings. To rise above them but keep them in view in a sublated form is the only way to form concrete and generalised opinions in aesthetics, which are equally alien to barren empiricism on the one hand and empty abstraction on the other. To sum up, aesthetics as a science is *a system of laws, categories and general concepts presenting, in the light of certain social practice, essential aesthetic ties, relationships and qualities of real life, and the process of its cognition according to the laws of the beautiful.*

The Unity (Monism) of the System

What is then the principle which should serve as the foundation of aesthetics as a science?

For *idealist aesthetics*, this is the Spirit. The aesthetic wealth of the world itself is viewed as the product of either the Absolute Spirit, i.e. God, or of individual consciousness, and the evolution of art, as a development stage passed by the Absolute Idea, or the result of the growing complexity of the artist's inner world. *Materialism* emphasises the objective existence of the world's aesthetic wealth and is aware of its material (natural or social) sources and causes.

From this point of view, art is imitation of nature (Aristotle), its mirror reflection (Leonardo da Vinci), the reproduction and interpretation of life and a judgement over it (Chernyshevsky), the reflection of social being in one of the forms of social consciousness (Marxism).

The history of aesthetics has known quite a few doctrines which attempted to embrace, using a single principle, world artistic process in its entirety. Each of these monist aesthetic doctrines depended on the interpretation of the relationship between art and life. Two of them – those of Aristotle and Hegel – were truly global.

Aristotle's system rested on the theory of imitation (mimesis). He distinguished between the object, material and way of imitation, and used the same principles to explain the aesthetic categories, the nature of art, and its kinds and genres. Aristotle's system is turned towards life whose relation to art is interpreted as imitation.

According to Hegel, the world proceeds from the Absolute Idea. Its self-movement creates a real, material world ("the other being" of the Absolute Idea) and determines the stages of its evolution. A major form of the evolution of the Absolute Idea which fills matter with the spirit is art.

When the Spirit first penetrates matter, matter (form) prevails over the idea (content). This stage corresponds to the first, symbolic, form of art (Ancient India, Ancient Egypt), which is best represented by architecture as the art where the material prevails over the spiritual. The same correlation of spirit and matter is inherent in the comic as an aesthetic category.

In its self-development, the Absolute Idea continues to fill matter with the Spirit ushering in the second stage – the classical art marked by harmony of the Spirit and matter, content and form. Harmony belongs, above all, to sculpture and painting, and to the chief aesthetic category – the beautiful. But

the balance is soon upset by the continued evolution of the Spirit. The romantic period begins and content begins to prevail over form; this process is reflected in the category of the sublime, and in arts – music and literature. In Hegel's grandiose and complete system, the evolution of art is part of the evolution of the world (the stage of the evolution of the Spirit in its connection with the material).

The evolution of art is begun by the evolution of the world, it flows into it and is consumed (negated) by it.

Finally, the idea (content) finds its way into the realm of pure spirituality and frees itself from matter (form). The advent of the epoch of philosophy begins, while the development of art is terminated.

Russian aestheticians – Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov – based their complete and original aesthetic system on the principle of artistic verity. They interpreted kinds and genres of art as artistic structures which gave a truthful, comprehensive and complete representation of life in all its diversity. They saw the various trends in the history of art as different historical stages of artistic cognition of the world and as types of artistic verity; realism was for them the most fruitful way of attaining it, and aesthetic categories were existing aesthetic qualities of life whose aesthetic wealth should be reflected by the truthful art.

The cornerstone of the aesthetic doctrine propounded in the present book is *life in its diversity considered from the point of view of its significance to man (the aesthetic)*. Interpretation of phenomena in the light of the sublime goals of historical development and their importance to man is a *new foundation of an aesthetic system*. A historically flexible harmonious system of laws and categories resting on this unified foundation is able to embrace the vital issues involved in aesthetic cognition of the world and in creative activity according to the laws of the beautiful.

Scientific Method

Cognition is impossible without its instrument, i.e. method. A truly scientific method is, according to Engels, an analogue of the object of cognition or, to be more precise, that part of the object which has been cognised. The cognised laws form the basis of the method but are not yet the method itself. A method is the rules formulated on the basis of these laws which serve to ensure a further advance of cognition. According to Hegel, "in searching cognition the method is also posited as an *instrument*, as a means imminent in and used by the subjective party to refer itself to the object."² The laws of the object are

reinterpreted in the method thus determining the actions of the subject.

The adequacy of a theory of reality depends on whether the requirements of the method are fulfilled. A genuine theory is always systematic. A theory or a system is not yet a method.

Not a single system of knowledge can be fully realised in the method since its contents are richer, but the method which emerged on the basis of a system oversteps its boundaries, transforming the old system of knowledge and producing a new one. As the more conservative element, the system seeks to preserve and perfect itself, while method is more mobile and seeks to accumulate knowledge and evolve a new system.

Using general methodology of philosophy as the universal basis, individual sciences work out their own methods of cognition. Aesthetics is no exception. The method of aesthetics rests on the knowledge accumulated by this science previously and transformed, with the help of general methodology of philosophy, into orientations, principles, approaches and modes of acquiring more knowledge. The method of aesthetics is *the historic approach*.

This approach is turned both against the idea of time standing still, the world petrified in eternal immobility, and the lopsided relativist idea of absolute fluidity, an incessant flow of time. It implies observing three principal conditions: first, all phenomena are considered in motion; second, the given phenomenon is studied in its interaction with others, and, third, history is interpreted in the light of contemporary experience and using historically more advanced forms as a key to understanding the preceding ones.

The principle of historic approach in aesthetics is more than a mechanical application of the tenets of dialectics to this branch of knowledge. It grows within aesthetics as a result of the need for a more thorough analysis of its subject. It has to be understood that art as it is today and its modern laws have been shaped in the course of history, and that the future of art is being formed within the artistic process going on before our very eyes.

The historic approach is the way to link up theory and practice and the only path leading to a truly modern aesthetics. Having risen to the historical and theoretical level, scientific thought is not an illustration of thought by artistic facts but development of thought on the basis of facts.

Major aspects of problems posed by aesthetics can also be solved with the help of *structural analysis*, i.e. stop-analysis which examines a static object, statics here being an instance of motion. Structural analysis is a component part of the historic approach and its important supplement.

It examines, as it were, a horizontal layer of a fact of art analysing it as a

system of elements (space, colour, text and context, time, etc.).

Aesthetics continues to develop, and so it is important that new theoretical propositions, observations and discoveries enter into it without disrupting its *monist* foundation but consolidating it. The historic approach turned not only towards the past but also towards the present and the future – that is the motive force in the evolution of aesthetic theory.

¹ Thomas Munro, *Toward Science in Aesthetics, Selected Essays*, The Liberal Arts Press, New York, 1956.

² Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke*, Fr. Frommans Verlag, Stuttgart, 1928, p.331.

AESTHETICS: THE THEORY OF AESTHETIC ACTIVITY

The Science of the Universal Aspects of Cognizing the World

AESTHETIC ACTIVITY

Aesthetic Activity: The Diversity of Its Forms

Any human activity, group or individual has, besides a purely utilitarian purpose, the grains of what makes it universally important for man. It is these grains which lend human activity its aesthetic flavour and even aesthetic content. In this sense, any human activity can be considered aesthetic, at least to a certain extent.

One may say that *any human activity considered from the point of view of its universal significance can be regarded as aesthetic.*

The universal form of aesthetic activity is creative work according to the laws of the beautiful.

Art is the heart of aesthetic activity. In it, the content of human activity is not only totally aesthetic but reaches the point at which the aesthetic turns into artistic activity producing immortal masterpieces of everlasting value to mankind.

However, aesthetic activity should not be reduced to its artistic form. It is much broader than art proper and embraces labour, everyday life and culture. A good example of this is landscape gardening. Gardens and parks are a product of man's cultural activity, which is directed at attaining harmony between man and nature.

They form a link between the ennobled nature and the man whose attitude to it is that of kindness.

Landscape gardening is not art proper, but it develops side by side with it and is affected by it. Its profound interrelation with art, especially poetry, is shown by the fact that the styles of parks and gardens follow the evolution of artistic trends. There exist Renaissance, baroque, rococo, classical and romantic parks and gardens. Within each style, national variations, and within the national variation – the individuality of the designer can be traced. A typical park showing French classicism is Versailles, which was created by Andre Lenotre. Another style is that of Dutch baroque; the gardens of the Moscow Kremlin are a fine example. They are terraced, as was required by the style, walled in, and dotted with summer-houses. Moscow baroque gardens differ from, say, Renaissance ones through the clearly perceptible spirit of irony.

Like Dutch gardens, they abound in picturesque nooks with mock perspective views.

The element of irony inherent in rococo gardens proves that aesthetic cognition of the world outside art proper is conducted not only according to the laws of the universal aesthetic category of the beautiful but also rests on the whole range of other aesthetic qualities of life (the sublime, the tragic, the comic, etc.).

Aesthetic activity outside art – in labour, everyday life and culture – embraces the work of a designer creating a functional and beautiful article for mass production, the process of production, the article itself, and its consumption. Work according to the laws of the beautiful in the system of material production, an aesthetic approach to work, the universal aspect of its products' value, the role of labour in the formation of aesthetic sensations, tastes and views – all this is the realm of aesthetic relationships between man and the world.

Aesthetic activity according to the laws of the beautiful, taking place beyond the boundaries of art has been going on for ages but made greatest headway in the 20th century. For a long time, no adequate term existed for it. It was called industrial art, applied art, artistic constructing, aesthetics of labour (industrial or technological aesthetics), design. The group of names which identified, brought together art and aesthetic activity outside it, or treated the latter as a new art implied that aesthetics should directly apply experience gained through the laws of artistic creativity to a field which is quite distinct from it.

Attempts to identify aesthetic activity with art are just as fallacious as attempts to divorce and oppose them. It is scientifically more accurate to make a terminological distinction between the broader notion of aesthetic activity (the activity embracing not only the beautiful but also the sublime, the tragic, the comic, etc.) and the more restricted notion of "activity according to the laws of the beautiful".

Aesthetic activity in industry and technology came to be known as design. This term implies, first and foremost, artistic designing as such, but also covers the entire process of the industrial production of a functional and at the same time beautiful article. In the work of the artist, who thinks in images, aesthetic activity reaches its peak, becoming art.

Aesthetic activity can be practical (landscape gardening, industrial design) or artistic (creation of works of art) as well as spiritual-cultural, emotional and intellectual when it shapes aesthetic impressions, notions, tastes and ideals,

and theoretical when it generates aesthetic doctrines and views. Aesthetic notions, tastes and ideals – the result of man's inner, spiritual life which serves to enrich his personality – find an outlet in the practical activity of a given individual and are embodied in the products of this activity.

Aesthetic perception and the formation of aesthetic notions means that the individual has understood and absorbed that which is universally valuable in the real world.

Aesthetic tastes add up to a system of aesthetic preferences and leanings based on historically conditioned aesthetic perceptions and notions.

The aesthetic ideal is the notion of harmony and perfection in life and culture which turns into a goal, standard and direction of man's activity towards changing the world and creating culture. The ideal does not always coincide with reality. But a nation which has a high national ideal produces geniuses who approach it.

Aesthetic doctrines are the historical experience of aesthetic activity of a given society which has been theoretically interpreted and formulated as a scientific system.

Aesthetic views are a system of aesthetic concepts prevalent in a given society or one of its divisions which determines its future aesthetic and artistic activity.

All varieties of artistic activity producing the wide range of kinds and forms of art and the institutions which govern this process and create conditions for it by educating creative individuals (art schools, colleges, amateur art groups, etc.) and by ensuring the social functioning of art (museums, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, etc.) add up to the *artistic culture* of the society. The latter plus design and the spiritual-cultural (shaping aesthetic tastes, ideals, etc.) and theoretical-aesthetic (formulating aesthetic doctrines and views, etc.) forms of aesthetic activity possible form the *aesthetic culture* of the society.

The Aesthetic and the Artistic

This is one of the more important problems of aesthetics, which has not yet been resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

Some theorists believe that the aesthetic is tantamount to the artistic, and that these terms are synonymous (Model 1).

But, making, say, a clock or a jacket, a person does not produce an artistically informative or conceptually loaded system of images; therefore, his activity cannot be regarded as artistic although it is certainly aesthetic. It is apparent

therefore that Model 1 is fallacious.

Other theorists (e.g. Max Dessoir, a German philosopher and psychologist) regard the aesthetic and the artistic as unconnected parallel notions (Model 2). Proceeding from this premise, they distinguish between aesthetics (the theory of activity according to the laws of the beautiful outside the boundaries of art) and the general theory of art (the theory of artistic activity within art).

However, this division is hardly legitimate, since both in history and current practice aesthetic activity frequently develops into art. The two types of activity have a great deal in common; though of course they have certain specific characteristics, there are a large number of laws valid for both which should be studied by the same science.

The third group of theorists think that, on the one hand, aesthetic activity is broader than artistic and that the latter is a particular case of the former, since man creates beauty not only in art (although in art this is always the case); on the other hand, artistic activity is *broader* than aesthetic and the latter is only an aspect and a *particular manifestation* of the former, for, taken in the entirety of its content and forms, artistic activity oversteps the boundaries of creative work according to the laws of the beautiful only (Model 3).

Art creates not only the beautiful but also the sublime, the tragic, and the comic. And yet art is not the only field where one can create.

The sublime, the tragic and the comic are not the domain of art only, their existence in life is beyond doubt. Aesthetic activity does not conform to the laws of the beautiful alone and produces more than just the beautiful. The tragic, the comic, the sublime, the ugly and the base are equally able to decide the character, content and result of aesthetic activity.

Is not a great deed a heroic act from the point of view of ethics, and an instance of the sublime from the point of view of aesthetics?

Can heroic epochs not be traced throughout human history when mass heroism was an everyday phenomenon? The sublime relates to the actions of the hero performing a noble deed in just the same way as the beautiful relates to the work of a craftsman making a beautiful and useful object. It is equally legitimate to talk about the sublimity of aesthetic activity which results in a great deed and the ugliness and baseness of a mean act.

There certainly exists aesthetic activity producing that which is comic in character, content and result but which nevertheless lies outside art. Is not the social function of jokes, funny stories, witticisms and puns a form of aesthetic activity according to the laws of the comic? Of course, it contains an element of the beautiful which makes itself felt in the ideal perceptible in the witticism

and in its polished form. In this sense, it is quite correct to say that in relation to aesthetic activity, the category of the beautiful is universal. But its aesthetic forms are still many and varied, and it is possible to proceed from aesthetic laws other than those of the beautiful alone.

In his work *Francois Rabelais and the Folk Culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (1965), Mikhail Bakhtin, a Soviet literary critic, has done a great deal to clarify the role and place of the comic in aesthetic activity. He discussed not only the art of comedy, but of the culture of comedy typical of the people in the Middle Ages.

The carnival is an instance of aesthetic activity which lies outside art and follows both the laws of the beautiful and the comic.

Aesthetic activity at the carnival was truly mass and large-scale in the Middle Ages: considering that it lasted, all in all, for three months out of every year, man spent a quarter of his life at it.

Let us now consider the tragic. Unquestionably, it exists both in life and art including that aspect of aesthetic activity which is not art. The tombstones created by Michelangelo are tragic sculpture.

But the stamp of tragedy lies also on the tombstones which are artistically worthless. The correlation between the Medici tomb by Michelangelo and a cross at a village graveyard is the same as between a salt-cellar by Donatello, which is a work of art, and an ordinary salt-container designed with due account to the laws of the beautiful and the functional. An element of the tragic is present in a funeral rite, in the universal custom of showing respect to and remembering the dead, in the ceremony of laying wreaths on the grave, in the solemn and mournful gathering around it, and in bidding the last farewell and paying the last homage to the dead.

At the same time, these are also forms of aesthetic activity in which the beautiful and the tragic are interwoven and interact.

Art concerns itself with everything which is *of interest to man as a human being*, i.e. it approaches a phenomenon from the universal (aesthetic) point of view. True, that which is common to all mankind is understood differently during different periods of history and by different classes and nations, but the object itself – to produce something of significance to all mankind – shows that the notion of the aesthetic has a very broad meaning and that aesthetic activity has many forms.

There are no non-aesthetic values in art; it presents utilitarian, moral and religious values not as non-aesthetic but as universally, i.e. *aesthetically* significant.

We consider that the correct correlation of the aesthetic and the artistic is expressed by Model 4, which maintains that the aesthetic is broader than the artistic.

Historically, aesthetic activity precedes artistic activity – the latter has grown out of the former and become its highest, ideal expression which has consolidated its best achievements and trends.

Design

Design is the principal, broadest and most advanced form of human non-artistic activity which conforms to the laws of the beautiful.

It embraces the preparation, production and existence of things manufactured by industry to meet the requirements of utility, convenience and beauty. The international seminar on design (Belgium, 1964) worked out the following definition of design:

Design is creative work whose goal is to determine the formal properties of manufactured goods, including both their external characteristics and, most important, the functional and structural interrelations which turn the article into a single whole both from the point of view of the producer and the consumer.

Design is the world of objects created by man by means of industrial technology which meet the demands of the beautiful and the functional. It is a new, industrial type of aesthetic activity, a way to humanise the means and results of production and the environment. Design has been called into being by mass production and consumption and the technological revolution, especially automation in industry, which has made it necessary to introduce standards into production. Machine production multiplies a specimen or sample which must be aesthetically superb thus anticipating and shaping consumers' tastes according to the latest styles, the function of the manufactured article, the cultural tradition of its social functioning, and the universal goal of humanising the outside world, the entire "second nature" surrounding man. Design creates a visual language (the term has been introduced by Walter Gropius, the German architect and art theorist) – the language of form which gives visual expression to ideas. In the visual language of design, the role of signs is played by proportions, optical illusion, colour and size, the relationship of light and shade, hollow and volume, colour and scale. The form here is the sign of the material, the technology and the quality of production of an article indicating its purpose (function) and social being in the system of culture.

Industrial development has put an end to the work of an individual producer,

an artisan when the same person began and completed the process of production. Today, any article is a result of the labour of many people: workers, technologists, engineers, designers, etc.

Hence the narrow specialisation of each of the many participants in manufacturing the article, which threatens, on the one hand, to break up man's universal creative potential and, on the other, to render null the aesthetic value of the manufactured article. This has been pointed out by the German architect and theorist of art Gottfried Semper, the founder of "practical aesthetics", when he summed up the results of the first great industrial exhibition

(London, 1851). He noticed that despite the advance of science and technology, the artistic achievements of modern civilisation were inferior to those of the previous ages.

The process of manufacturing things has been speeded up and become truly large-scale; as a result, unique articles made by artisans came to be replaced by mass-produced, identical ones. The articles of production have ceased to be a luxury, but they have also ceased to be luxurious since they no longer bear the stamp of the personality of their creator. It was at this point that the constructor, whose responsibility lay in making the object functional, came to be assisted by the artist, who was responsible for the object's aesthetic aspect. Ideally, the two should be united in one person – a designer, a member of the new profession, an aesthetically educated engineer-cum-artist.

The encroachment of the aesthetic element upon production is gradually spreading to all its sections-automobile-building, radio engineering, and even manufacturing the means of production, such as tools and machine-tools. In industry, the utilitarian and the aesthetic are being rapidly and thoroughly blended. A search for the convenient and the useful is becoming also a search for the expressive and the beautiful. Today, not a single industry can do without design.

Modern technology modifies man's notions of the beautiful. Manufacturing an article necessitates inventing, constructing, putting together and working out an adequate method of production. In this chain of creative events the role of design is putting together and determining new links between parts of the article. Conjuring the aesthetic picture of the future article, the designer seeks to make it not only useful and beautiful but also constructively expedient and technologically profitable.

Design implies the regrouping of objects, as well as borrowing components from a wide range of fields – from the use of the expedient forms suggested

by nature (the realm of bionics) to discovering the development trends of these forms and making prognostications concerning their future. But while bionics borrows directly from living nature, design first subjects what has been borrowed to "cultural processing". In fact, the store of shapes for design is culture, which puts all impressions of existence through the sieve of human experience.

The application of updated cultural forms in a totally new field produces a tremendous effect. For example, wireless sets, radiograms and tape recorders can look quite dramatic when shaped like dominoes: a black lacquered board is divided in halves by a white fluorescent vertical stroke. To the left and right are large round opaquely gleaming spots, for instance, 6:3 or 5:4. The fluorescent stroke can serve as the scale of the wireless, and the gleaming spots as knobs for band switch, volume control, etc. The number of the knobs (gleaming spots) depends on the technical requirements and, as in dominoes can be varied on each part (the left or the right) from 0 to 6.

In a sense, design is a result of the boundless expansion of the sphere of applied art and its development in industry, a product of aesthetics founding its way into technology and of art encroaching upon production.

Design seeks to make the article not only convenient and functional but also emotionally expressive and aesthetically valuable. The designer creates such objects and means of production which acquire an ability to appeal to man, i.e. possess aesthetic value. Design ensures a humane relationship between the object and the man, its consumer. And since there is another man, its creator, behind every object which becomes a sort of an intermediary between the producer and the consumer, design helps "humanise" human relations. Using artistically designed objects, man as it were contemplates himself in the world he has created deriving profound aesthetic pleasure from the process. Design makes possible mass-scale cultural and aesthetic communication transmitting a certain artistic taste through the objects of everyday use, work tools and household articles manufactured by modern industry.

Design penetrates all fields of human life and activity. The force and scope of its impact are comparable only to those of the cinema and TV. In a sense, design is even more powerful. To go to the movies, one has to find the time and get the ticket; to become a member of TV audience, one has to buy a set and have some leisure time. But to come under the aesthetic influence of design, it is enough to live in the modern world. It is impossible to remain unaffected by it even if one were to set oneself such a goal, for no one has been able to exist outside the epoch's culture or do without its attributes, such

as furniture, household utensils, transport, books, etc., which are all products of design and bear a stamp of a distinctive style.

The impact of style on human consciousness is particularly profound and direct. A certain shape of a spoon, hammer, car or TV set serves more than just utilitarian purposes – it also exercises an aesthetic influence. The latter is linked with the way of life of a given society and the type of thinking and activity characteristic of a given epoch.

Design carries the artistic tradition and taste into the sphere of everyday things and utilitarian consumption. It reflects the level of scientific and technological development of the society materialized in consumer goods, household utensils, work tools, transport, and products of culture. Design contains the secret of mass production (the technology of creation) of a given article which is aesthetically perfect and convenient to use. It is the meeting-ground for the constructor and the artist, the producer and the consumer, thanks to the transformation of the product of labour made aesthetically valuable into an object of utilitarian and aesthetic consumption.

In other words, design is *mass communication* within society uniting people by consumption of the same industrially produced and aesthetically valuable goods and their style, and by the way of life.

Design blends spiritual and material, and humanitarian and industrial culture into a single whole; it combines art and the scientific, technological and industrial-technological culture thus ensuring the cultural unity of modern civilization.

AESTHETICS: THE THEORY OF AESTHETIC ACTIVITY

The Science of the Universal Aspects of Cognizing the World

AESTHETICS: FIELD OF OPERATION

Practical Aesthetics

The subject and the range of problems embraced by aesthetics is broader than just art in all its forms. It is no accident that in modern aesthetics, classification of the arts remains a controversial issue. Thomas Munro, the American theorist, ranks among arts not only literature, theatre, painting, music, etc., but also cattle-breeding, plastic surgery, beauty treatment, perfumery, cooking, wine-making, gastronomy, clothes designing, hairdressing, tattooing – around four hundred in all. Munro considers art boundless, an attitude which has a history almost as long as Aristotle's theory of artistic kinds. In many languages, crafts and several other types of human activity are called arts. The Ancient Greeks had one word, *techne*, for both arts and craft, and the first artists were potters, masons, carpenters and members of other trades who produced articles for everyday use.

Munro's theory is essentially the same as that developed by the celebrated Central Asian scholar al-Farabi (870-950), who wrote in Arabic. Cooking, perfumery, tactfulness and fine manners which Munro classified as arts, as well as weaving, medicine and rhetorics, respected by al-Farabi for the craftsmanship they required, are not creative work proper but are means, forms and fields of cognition of the world which do contain an element of the aesthetic since they conform not only to the laws of the functional but of the beautiful as well. The views expounded by al-Farabi and Munro are to a certain extent rational. At the early stages of human history, tattooing, for instance, undoubtedly had both aesthetic, ideological and emotional meaning. As far as the present is concerned, in certain fields man is capable of creating things so aesthetically expressive that they can be considered specimens of art: for instance, a hair-style or an outfit may become part of the character portrayed by an actor in the cinema or theatre. However, such examples are too few to make a rule. Out of the 400 arts listed by Munro, many belong to the domain of aesthetic cognition of the world according to the laws of the beautiful; some of them, at least in their best achievements, belong to design, others – to applied and decorative art, and still others – to practical aesthetics. The long-established tendency of aesthetics to expand the kinds and boundaries of art to include ever new forms of human activity shows that,

first, besides art, aesthetics deals with all forms of cognition of the world which conform to the laws of the beautiful, even the practical and utilitarian ones, and, second, that no insurmountable barrier exists between artistic and practical aesthetic activity, architecture and applied and decorative art being borderline cases on the side of art, and design – on the side of practical cognition of the world.

Art is that established and firmly fixed form of aesthetic cognition of the world according to the laws of the beautiful which, beside aesthetic content, has an artistic concept of the world and personality, and a set of images filled with a definite ideological and emotional meaning. And since all the diversity of the forms of aesthetic cognition of the world can by no means be reduced to art, the subject of aesthetics is much broader than art.

Aesthetics embraces such little-developed problems as the aesthetic organisation of the environment, aesthetics of the "second" (man-made) nature, the social forms of human behaviour, the beauty of human relations (in this sense, aesthetics is the ethics of the future), and everyday life.

Scientific research, sports, creative processes in various spheres of activity, games, festivities and group activities have an aesthetic side to them which has not yet been adequately explored by aesthetics but is nevertheless its concern.

Laying out parks, city planning, artificial seas, all types of communications, the biosphere which is being turned into the noosphere, and outer space, which has already become an object of exploration – all present or may present an interest for aesthetics.

In other words, it embraces the whole world, the processes underway in it, man, his entire activity and culture and its products in so far as they are of value to humanity as a race, i.e. have aesthetic significance.

All sections of aesthetics which lie outside art are divided into (1) practical aesthetics¹ concerned with daily life, human behaviour, creative work in the field of science, sport, etc., and (2) technical aesthetics, or the theory of design.

Technical Aesthetics

Technical aesthetics as the theory of design deals with the aesthetic cognition of the world by industrial means. It studies the process by which a useful and beautiful article is designed, produced by industry from some material and introduced to the consumer entering into certain relations with man and society. Technical aesthetics sums up the experience of the mass production of

labour implements (machines and machine tools) and other articles combining utilitarian and aesthetic qualities, and assesses the experience gained in cognition of the world by application of the laws of the beautiful to modern production.

Many new branches of knowledge have grown on the borderline dividing some two sciences. A case in point is technical aesthetics, which has now detached itself from general aesthetics. Using the achievements of both art and technology, it brings together and examines the numerous social, economic, technical, psychic, physiological and hygienic factors taken in their interaction, as well as the data supplied by ergonomics, which studies the principles of the scientific organisation of labour and the psychological and physiological potential of man with a view to providing the best possible conditions for his activities.

Ideas of technical aesthetics originated in the mid-19th century, long before design. Lecturing in Manchester in 1857, John Ruskin, the English sociologist and art theorist, spoke about the aesthetically valuable fruits of production pointing out that that which is manufactured hurriedly is just as hurriedly consumed; that which is cheapest turns out to be the most expensive. Ruskin spoke about the art of ordinary things, placing it first in the hierarchy of the arts.

He believed that machine production has a disastrous effect not only on manufactured goods but on their producers and consumers as well, and offered to return to handicraft industry – a retrospective Utopia of sorts. Ruskin's ideas were taken up by William Morris who maintained that machine production would be supplanted by new handicraft labour, since the products of the former, although cheap, were not worth producing. Morris made an attempt to put his ideas into practice setting up modern handicraft production units.

Technical aesthetics first came to be practically developed by Gottfried Semper. In 1860-63, he published a two-volume work *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder Praktische Aesthetik*. According to Semper, the shape of an article depends on (1) its function; (2) the material it is made from; (3) the technology of production; and (4) the social and ideological factor which is determined by a given society.

Franz Reuleaux, an engineer and a founder of the theory of mechanisms and machines, came out against a rigid division of art and engineering. In 1862 he published a book on style in machine-building, where he advocated introduction of architectural styles into that industry. On the brink of the 20th

century, Henry van de Velde, an architect who worked in Belgium and Germany, said that it was necessary to bring the technical properties of an article in concord with its artistic qualities subordinating the latter to expediency, logic and "practical and reasonable beauty".

Following in his steps, Hermann Muthesius, sociologist and art theorist, advocated the introduction of artistic elements into technology.

In 1919 an institution known as the Bauhaus was set up in Germany which became a centre of technical aesthetics seeking to bridge the gap between art and technology.

In Russia, the ideas of technical aesthetics began to spread in the early 20th century. Much was said about a union of art and technology, and the idea arose that the industrial enterprise itself should be a thing of beauty.

Technical aesthetics continued to make headway. Its ideas found expression in the rejection of ornamental elements in technical appliances, production and its outputs and a desire to achieve a perfect blend of the functional and the beautiful. In the 1920s, it assumed the form of "industrial art". In their theoretical and practical works its adherents – A. Rodchenko, V. Tatlin, L. Lisitsky, M. Ginsburg, I. Leonidov *et al.* – advocated the concept of art as productive activity, in fact, as any vital activity. The National Art and Technology Workshops set up in 1920 carried on practical and theoretical research into design and technical aesthetics.

Summing up the achievements of design, technical aesthetics is called on to formulate its basic principles: the broadest possible field of association, and the reshaping of the initial objects. The success of artistic design depends on the distance between initial objects and the degree of their creative reshaping with a view to attaining new functionality and compatibility.

The basic social principles of aesthetics read as follows: *a designer deals with objects, but his objective is man; the most aesthetically advanced forms are also the most economical ones.* Developing the theoretical foundations of design, technical aesthetics channels man's efforts into humanising technology and the "second nature" and introduces harmony into a world full of machines.

The most immediate practical goal of design is to produce either a new object, or new properties in the initial object with a view to its function and beauty. The final goal of design is to attain better social conditions and improve the world from the aesthetic point of view.

An important aspect of design in creating industrial environment and determining its aesthetic level is colour. It is used according to the recommendations of physiology, psychology and aesthetics, as well as the

experience accumulated by art. The latter testifies to the fact that the colour, form and purpose of an object are indivisible: that colour may either improve or worsen the aesthetic and functional qualities of an object.

Colour and rhythm are the leading and organising principles of constructive space. The aesthetic quality of a workshop or a rest-room is made up of lighting, the colour of the walls, ceiling and machine tools, and the spacing of equipment. The designer has to take into account the psychology and physiology of colour perception, its connection with the object's function, and the technology of the process of production.

Goethe was one of the first to notice that colour affects the mood: yellow cheers up, blue upsets, and green calms down. Indeed, the object's colour strongly affects the person psychologically. It turned out that the interiors of aircraft should not be painted a "joyous", sunny yellow: it upsets the vestibular apparatus, causing nausea. Hot shop floors are better not be painted red, orange or other warm hue but light blues or greens which contribute to man's physical well-being and increase his capacity for work. Today, the colour scheme of a shop floor or a community or recreation centres has become a link in the chain "man-colour-space" and is chosen with due regard for the other links. Colour is considered in conjunction with sound, lighting, air and form and is regarded as a major component of the psychological climate at an enterprise.

Design implies (1) a new idea in the economy and planning; (2) the development of a new functional structure; (3) the rational implementation of this idea, and a harmonious and expressive style.

The combination in an object of all the three produces complete design; the presence of the last two means modernisation; when only the third is present, it means styling, i.e. aesthetic adaptation of already existing articles.

Commercial styling, which is a form of the existence of design under the conditions of competition, adjusts the shape of the product to make it more saleable regardless of its often vulgarising influence on the taste of the consumers. Commercial styling is frequently used as a means of getting rid of poor-quality goods. However, this does not mean that styling as a whole should be rejected. Ideally, design should meet truly human requirements and not those suggested by advertising.

Technical aesthetics formulates the requirements to be met by manufactured goods, by the environment in which these goods are produced and consumed, and by the means of their production. It gives recommendations concerning the creation of "technical landscape", the landscape of the "second nature",

which have a great practical value resting as they do on experiment and the enormous experience accumulated by modern science and technology.

¹ The use of term "practical aesthetics" in the present book differs from that of G. Semper's, who identified practical and technical aesthetics.

AESTHETICS: THE AXIOLOGY OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES

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THE AESTHETIC: ITS ESSENCE AND PRINCIPAL FORMS

Theoretical Models of the Aesthetic

The aesthetic is a metacategory, i.e. the broadest and most fundamental category of aesthetics. It embraces that which is common to the beautiful, the ugly, the sublime, the base, the tragic, the comic, the dramatic and to all other aesthetic characteristics of life and art. What then is the essence of the aesthetic?

In the course of its development, aesthetics has evolved five theoretical models.

Model 1 (*objective idealism*): the aesthetic appears when god or the Idea spiritualises the world.

Model 2 (*subjective idealism*): the aesthetic appears when the individual's inner wealth is superimposed on life, which is aesthetically neutral.

Model 3 (*dualism*): the aesthetic is produced by a union of the objective and the subjective. The materialistic approach to this problem has engendered two alternative viewpoints concerning the nature of the aesthetic.

Model 4 (*metaphysical materialism or the naturalistic doctrine*) regards aesthetic characteristics as the natural properties of objects like, say, weight, symmetric composition, colour or shape. This model, which has become quite popular, contains, however, too many incongruities to be accepted as the model: if the aesthetic stands in the same row as the object's physical and chemical properties, it is not quite clear why it is aesthetics and not the natural sciences that study it; aesthetic characteristics cannot be calculated or measured in the same way as natural properties can; even if the essence of the aesthetic in nature can somehow be explained with the help of the naturalistic doctrine, its essence in social life and art would have still remained obscure; this interpretation of the aesthetic does not allow a monist explanation of such basic forms of the aesthetic as the beautiful and the sublime on the one hand, and the tragic and the comic on the other; it has been generally accepted that the latter are clearly social in character.

Model 5 (*dialectical materialism*) treats the aesthetic as an objective property of phenomena and objects which is a result of their relations with the life of society, mankind.

The last model makes it possible to avoid the theoretical incongruities mentioned above.

If one is to try and explain the nature of the aesthetic, the following questions inevitably arise: what is the object of aesthetic relationship? What is the role of social practice in its existence?

What is the connection between the aesthetic and the utilitarian?

Aesthetics has provided these questions with a whole variety of sometimes contradictory answers.

The Aesthetic and the Useful

The aesthetic as a category in its own right has only recently become an object of study. In the history of aesthetics, it has often been analysed in the course of studies concerned with the beautiful.

Socrates identified the beautiful and the useful; the aesthetic was a derivative of the utilitarian, practical value of an object. A beautifully adorned shield which failed to protect its owner from the enemy could not in his opinion be called beautiful, but a shield which did its job well could, even be it devoid of any adornment whatsoever. In a naive and oversimplified form, Socrates introduced social practice into the definition of the beautiful and the aesthetic. However; it is a bit difficult to whole-heartedly support the statement which was the logical crown of Socrates' doctrine: a bag of manure is beautiful since it is useful.

The search for the nature of the aesthetic has moved in a direction opposite to that chosen by Socrates.¹ Sankara, the Indian Buddhist philosopher (9th century) said that aesthetic perception is marked by tranquillity, peace and lucidity, and the absence of carnal desires.

In the Oriental tradition, the aesthetic is essentially the expression of true spirituality, that inner voice of existence and cosmic consciousness which elevates man above humdrum existence and allows him to perceive his own higher spiritual self. In this tradition, attainment of spiritual purification and insight is made aesthetic.

Kant maintained that aesthetic perception of an object implies a disinterested attitude towards it as distinct from a moral or practical attitude; he wrote: that is beautiful which is universally liked without being conceptualised... Beauty is a form of purposefulness of an object in so far as it is perceived in that object without reference to a purpose... That is beautiful which, without being referred to a concept, is seen to be an object that compels liking.²

Kant stressed the spiritual quality of the aesthetic singling it out from the realm of the utilitarian, but he also regarded as an absolute the absence of any practical interest in the object of man's aesthetic perception.

It is clear that a theoretical antinomy of sorts has been evolved: the beautiful-the utilitarian, and the beautiful-the useless. How can this contradiction be resolved?

Reflecting on the unity of the utilitarian and the aesthetic in modern architecture, it would seem that the truth is with Socrates. However, subscribing to his views unconditionally would mean admitting that a decadent painter who refused to acknowledge the beauty of the Venus of Milo on account of its practical uselessness is right too. It follows that it is incorrect to equate the beautiful and the useful.

But what about the beautiful and the useless? Our admiration of beauty is disinterested. But Kant's ideas contradict the experience of modern production which seeks to manufacture articles which are both beautiful and useful. Therefore, the beautiful is not the useless either. Clearly, either of the two approaches is both sound and erroneous. The antinomy the beautiful-the useful and the beautiful-the useless reflects *the existing contradiction of* human activity which, although invariably practical, also includes the aesthetic.

The aesthetic is identified with the useful by trends that sum up the experience of the consciousness which is not yet aware of its spirituality but has already moved into the realm of practical interests and is immersed in the world of objects. On the contrary, the doctrines treating the aesthetic as the useless consider it the sphere of purely spiritual human relations. Singling out the aesthetic from the field of the utilitarian was an attempt to establish its universal historical and cultural value as an essential ability of the active individual.

The fate of primitive man depended on his success in hunting which required a trained and keen eye, and a knowledge of the ways and habits of animals. It was that experience which was summed up and perpetuated in the hunting scenes engraved on cliffs which sharpened the hunter's eye and added strength to his arm and hand.

But all the inner life of primitive man, all his consciousness and emotions were reduced to just that one experience. His spirituality lay outside his individual existence. It was confined to a narrowly practical and spontaneous attitude to life and expressed in the sensual images of objects which reflected that which came directly within the scope of man's vital activity. And yet even primitive man's attitude to the world had grains of the generic, the universally

human, and that allowed the aesthetic to start to grow on the basis of the practical.

Today, the practical approach does not directly determine the content and form of the aesthetic. Enjoying the beauty and the natural primitive power of a mountain stream, we do not think about using it to set turbines in motion. But behind the aesthetic perception of nature lurks, in an indirect form, the whole historical, cultural and social experience of mankind and all the layers of meaning which add up to an aesthetic appreciation of things. Aesthetic perception is free from utilitarian orientations, but it has nevertheless been evolved by mankind's social and historical practice which is superimposed, as it were, over each of our momentary, subjective and purely emotional reactions. The notion of the useful points not only to the vital need for a given object but also to a conscious intention to use the object to satisfy certain utilitarian and everyday needs. Only in pragmatism as an ideological trend does the useful become the basic principle. In life, it precedes and forms the foundation of the aesthetic.

The Aesthetic as a Value

The aesthetic operates in the form of the useful until the time when human society evolves the antinomy: nature-culture and the natural-the social.

Enjoying beauty, man does not satisfy any of his utilitarian needs, like thirst or hunger. Aesthetic perception is guided by that most sublime interest which appears only when man has satisfied his most immediate needs and when a complicated network of social interests has been formed which are often far removed from utilitarian needs.

Georgi Plekhanov emphasised the social character of man's interest in the object of aesthetic perception. Earlier, the same line was explored by another Russian aesthetician, Nikolai Chernyshevsky, who said that the products of art are an object of universal interest in the life of man.

The absence of direct utilitarian interest in our perception of an aesthetic object allows aesthetic perception to embrace the whole variety and wealth of man's age-old social and historical experience. In other words, the content of the aesthetic has been determined by mankind's historic progress.

Perceiving the aesthetic in an object (its aesthetic characteristics), we perceive *its broadest social and practical significance, its value for humanity as a whole, for man as a race*. While for somebody who is cold and longs for refuge,

a tree is valuable mostly as prospective firewood or building material, its value for humanity as a whole is an integral – an infinite sum of infinitely small utilitarian values which in aesthetic perception assume the form of something welcome, desirable, evoking pleasure, joy and satisfaction. The ability of objects to carry social and cultural meaning forms the basis of their aesthetic value. Objects are materially definite, sensually concrete and have certain natural properties, all of which is the *natural material* of the aesthetic. In the process of man's socio-historical existence, objects and phenomena become involved into the sphere of human interests acquiring *social characteristics*, the "sensual-suprasensual" character, a value for man as a race, i.e. their aesthetic qualities.

It may seem odd that natural objects, such as a flower, a forest or a star have social properties. This is an aforethought but philosophically impotent bewilderment of common sense which proceeds from the obvious, from direct experience of material

activity in everyday life. Common sense and reason perceive the suprasensual socio-historical features as the objective features of sensual objects. Common sense endows them with absolute aesthetic nature independent of history or human activity. The position of common sense is represented by the naturalistic doctrine of the

aesthetic. However, there is a mistake here similar to that which is made when it is taken for an obvious fact that the Sun revolves around Earth.

Social and historical practice involves the objects into its realm and puts them in certain relationships with people. The forest, the flower, and even the distant heavenly bodies have long been included by man into the sphere of his practical vital activity. For instance, stars helped explorers and seafarers to find their bearings, they were used by man to tell the time of the day, to devise a calendar, fix the time of the year and of sowing and harvesting.

Involvement into social and historical practice gave objects social characteristics, and among them, certain value for man as a race. The object acquired an objective, society-produced aesthetic content (aesthetic properties).

The object's aesthetic value depends therefore not only on its natural properties but also on those social conditions under which it exists. Gold affects man aesthetically not only as a glittering substance extracted from the earth but also as a metal personifying money, i.e., in the final account, a certain type of social relations. The object's aesthetic properties are not identical to its colour. One cannot identify the aesthetic quality of gold with

glitter, just as it would be wrong to regard anything that glitters as gold. The essence of the aesthetic is "supranatural"; to stress the point once more, it has a socio-historical and socio-cultural character, which is expressed through the sensual material of objects. In other words, *the aesthetic embodies the natural and social features of the object in their relation to human activity and in their significance to man as a race.* The aesthetic is a universal human value. While, say, politics treats phenomena from the point of view of relations between classes, and ethics – in the light of their significance for individual societies, for aesthetics they exist, first and foremost, in their universal significance for the human race. Each time, man proceeds from a definite social experience. But it is the aesthetic approach which allows him to assimilate this experience in personal, spiritual and cultural forms. Both political and ethical perception have a class, a national, and a universal human element. In aesthetic perception, however, the universal always prevails. Aesthetic values are of a universal nature. This is the basis and the source of the intransient value of the great works of art produced by different epochs. Thus, in a sense, Greek art is still the norm and an unattainable standard. Assessing the various phenomena aesthetically, man establishes the degree of his supremacy over the world. This degree is determined by the level and nature of the development of society and its production. The latter reveals the universal significance of the natural properties of objects and defines their aesthetic characteristics. Perception of the aesthetic qualities of nature is always determined by the degree to which man has understood and explored it, and the measure and character of this exploration. The broader man's social practice, the broader the sphere of aesthetically appreciated phenomena.

The Aesthetic as a System-Builder

We have established that the aesthetic is a universal human value and that aesthetic characteristics of objects bear a stamp of the historical type of man's activity. This approach to the aesthetic allows a *complete and systematic* understanding of aesthetic wealth and diversity of life and the principal ways of its aesthetic cognition. Such understanding not only furnishes a key to revealing the essence of aesthetic forms – the beautiful, the sublime, the tragic, the comic, the ugly, the base, etc., but also serves as the theoretical foundation for dealing with all the chief questions of aesthetics and, first and foremost, for a scientific interpretation of its categories and

laws.

This is the starting point of aesthetics as a scientific system.

Life in its aesthetic wealth and universal human value is an object of art. This explains the longevity of works of classical art, which treated contemporary objects and phenomena aesthetically, i.e. from the point of view of their universal value for man. Without that, a work ceases to be art and becomes an illustration or a declaration. A utilitarian approach to the material supplied by life not only produces clichés but destroys the very nature of art, disrupts the artistic image and turns art into a time-server whose products cannot possibly have any lasting value.

This interpretation of the object of art implies that philosophical, ethical and political ideas should find their way into it and encourage its progress but should not substitute the aesthetic, turning art into an illustration of ideas engendered by other forms of social

consciousness. Art creates and regulates the mechanism of individual assimilation of social and historical experience accumulated by man.

Through art, man experiences the information about the world as a personal sensation.

The objective aesthetic characteristics of life lie at the basis of image in art.

Aesthetic cognition of nature and society presupposes a deep interest in the cognised object itself, a conscious desire to grasp it both in its entirety and in its particulars. This is the root of the imaginative nature of art.

The understanding of the world's aesthetic wealth as the object of art makes it possible not only to comprehend the features of an artistic method but also to find approaches to a scientific classification of art, i.e. develop the principles and a system of its division into kinds and genres.

Interpretation of the aesthetic as a universal human value makes it possible to explore the chief problems of aesthetics as a monist system, proceeding from a single principle.

¹ Socrates' ideas concerning the practical character of the aesthetic differ from those of modern pragmatism as a school of thought which maintains that the aesthetic should serve everyday needs representing the demands and tastes engendered by mass consciousness.

² See Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Verlag Philipp Reclam jun., Leipzig, 1968, pp.63, 75, 99, 105.

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THE BEAUTIFUL

The Beautiful in the History of Aesthetics

Admiring a beautiful woman, Boris Pasternak said that to fathom the secret of her charm is tantamount to solving the riddle of life. The secret of beauty is the secret of life.

On a spring day of 1848, Heinrich Heine, who was gravely ill, walked out into the sunlit streets of Paris adorned with first greenery.

Fighting weakness, he made his way to the Louvre and stopped before the Venus of Milo. The poet came to that treasurehouse of art to take his leave of life. To part with life meant for him to part with beauty.

The secret of beauty has puzzled man for centuries. Debates concerning it have never stopped throughout the history of mankind.

Ancient civilisations have produced objects which give an idea of our ancestors' understanding of the world and their philosophical and aesthetic views. One of the world's oldest civilisations was that created by the Sumerians. As far back as in the 25th century B.C., they had a written language. A text dating back to that period contains one of the earliest disputes about the problem which even now has not been solved by aesthetics: the relationship between the beautiful and the useful. The text, called *Summer and Winter, or Enlil Chooses the Patron of Peasants*, tells about Enlil, the Air God, who decided to bring affluence to the earth and created two brothers, Emesh (Summer) and Enten (Winter). Each brother claimed to be the more handsome, and the father settled the argument by naming the more useful as the more beautiful:

*The waters which bring life to all countries are the charge of Enten,
The tiller of land among the Gods, who produces all.
Emesh, my son, how can you compare yourself to your brother Enten!*

The aesthetic doctrine expounded here is a forerunner of Socrates' idea that the more useful is the more beautiful.

The Sumerian poem *Inanna Chooses a Husband* also identifies the utilitarian and the beautiful. Utu, the Sun God, pleads with his sister Inanna to marry Dumuzi, the God of Shepherds. Inanna rather prefers Enkimda, the God of Land-Tillers, "who grows grain in abundance". "But how is he better than I?" inquires Dumuzi and argues that he does more good than Enkimda, who can give only grain and peas. Finally, Inanna chooses the God of Shepherds, who can benefit people in more ways by giving them sweet cheese, cream, skins and wool, i.e. provide them with food, clothes and footwear.

In the text, the economic role of cattle-breeding and its singular usefulness account for the greater beauty of the God of Shepherds and, consequently, the greater weight of his claim to becoming a member of the family of the Sun God by marrying Inanna. Similarly, the ancient Egyptian civilisation left no treatises devoted solely to aesthetics. But scattered among its literary works, hymns to gods and pharaohs' life stories are many profound theoretical ideas on the nature of art and the aesthetic qualities of life. An ancient Egyptian papyrus glorifying the beauty of the Nile says:

*The ruler of the fishes, the leader of the birds,
Creating barley, creating emmer,
He brings feasts to the temples.
If he slows down, all breathing stops
And all people grow pale,
Sacrifices to gods are destroyed,
And millions of people perish....
When he rises, the earth rejoices
And everything living is filled with joy,
The teeth begin to laugh....
Bringing bread, abundant in food,
Creating all beauty....*

This hymn to the Nile written in the period of the Middle Kingdom treats beauty as a product of life and the source of its continuation and its boons. Egyptians believed that beauty was life. The hymn to Aton, the Sun King, says,

*You give life to the hearts by your
Beauty, which is life.*

In antiquity, man's approach to the world was still quite uncomplicated; the aesthetic and the practical were not completely divorced, and therefore every relationship of man with the world can be considered aesthetic.

Classical Greek aesthetics was part of an undivided body of knowledge.

Individual sciences had not yet formed independent branches of the single tree of human knowledge. Every characteristic of the universe had grains of aesthetic appreciation. The very idea of the world was essentially aesthetic.

The first natural philosophers considered the aesthetic and the cosmological as one: the beautiful was a universal quality of beauty, the universal harmony and beauty of cosmos (the word means the universe, the world, adornment, apparel, beauty, order, harmony; it is no chance that the word cosmetics is derived from the same root).

Natural philosophers maintained that the world and its beauty were objective reality, and the idea has won many adherents among theorists in later ages.

The Pythagoreans regarded the world as a well-organised system, "the whole heaven ... is ... a musical scale and a number". The interpretation of the very essence of the universe as resting on the combination of these two elements lies at the roots of the theoretical tradition of "measuring harmony by algebra", which has eventually led to modern structural methods used in the study of art.

Developing the problem of acoustics in music, the Pythagoreans for the first time ever implemented the idea of a mathematical approach to beauty. They discovered the dependence of the musical intervals on certain arithmetic ratios of lengths of string: at the same tension, 2:1 giving the octave, 3:2 the fifth and 4:3 the fourth.

Beauty is harmonious, and harmony appears where there is inequality, the unity of diversity. In the presence of equality and absence of contradiction, harmony is unnecessary, but where the opposites are mixed in equal proportion, there is well-being and health. Musical harmony is a particular case of universal harmony, its expression through sound. Beauty is the measure of harmony and reality of existence, the measure of concord with cosmos.

The Pythagoreans developed the idea of the harmony of spheres. Planets were supposed to be surrounded by air and fastened to lucid spheres. The intervals between the spheres relate as the intervals of the tones in the octave. The motion of the planets produces sounds whose pitch depends on the speed of the motion. But human ear is unable to perceive the universal harmony of the spheres. This fantastical theory reflects the naive and cheerful idea of the

Universe as a gloriously sounding orchestra.

In the opinion of Heraclitus, harmony was not a static balance but motion and dynamics. In his teaching, the central and most powerful element is fire. He compared the life and destiny of all living beings to the flame which consumes everything and turns it into ashes thus making birth possible again, after which death will follow once more.

The beauty of life is the beauty of struggle, the beauty of perpetual death and perpetual formation and resurrection from the ashes in a multitude of new forms. Beauty is the nature of fire woven from contradictions and straining into the future. Contradiction is the source of harmony and the condition of the existence of beauty: that which diverges comes together; the most perfect harmony emerges from opposition. Straining apart, the two points of the drawn bow or a lyre produce coordinated action. Heraclitus saw the structure of the beautiful in the unity of conflicting opposites. The image of the bow was a theoretical model of the dialectical structure of harmony, historically very accurate: the bow was the forerunner and the first source of musical sound; all stringed instruments can be traced back to it.

For the first time in the history of aesthetics, Heraclitus discussed perception of beauty which, in his opinion, can be understood not through calculation or abstract thinking but through contemplation.

How can one measure fire, that all-consuming element, which is never the same? According to Heraclitus, to grasp the essence of fire, i.e. beauty, the thinking and contemplating individual has to possess a highly delicate instrument – the ability to think dialectically, which is the quality of thought that likens it to fire. For Heraclitus, to understand the essence of life and the nature of beauty means to reveal the controversial character of existence, birth and death, struggle and harmony.

Empedocles, another Greek materialist, believed that the world was made up of four protoelements: fire, air, earth, and water. They are united by love, which produces harmony and beauty, and divided by animosity, which is the source of chaos and ugliness. The teaching of Empedocles is marked by a unity of cosmogony and aesthetics.

It also contains the idea of evolutionism. The initial period in the development of the living nature was the time when only disjointed organs existed – arms without shoulders, eyes without a face, etc.

Later, these organs began to combine, accidentally and chaotically. The epoch of monsters was in, whole beings who were devoid of harmony and beauty in the combination of their parts. Only the contemporary epoch has produced

animals and people who were sensibly and harmoniously organised. The evolution of living nature was for Empedocles the aesthetic evolution of the world, the process of the emergence of beauty and harmony.

Democritus advanced the theory of measure and developed the doctrine of hedonism: life should be enjoyable; one should enjoy only that which is beautiful, and in moderation. Not any pleasure should be pursued but only that which has at least an element of the beautiful. To him who has become immoderate the most pleasant may become most unpleasant.

Plato's dialogues contain a comprehensive and profound analysis of the beautiful. In the Greater Hippias, the question he poses is not 'What is beautiful?' but 'What is beauty?' The interlocutors are Hippias and Socrates; the latter tries to show the former how to reach the correct solution to a problem.

Socrates: "What is beauty?" Hippias: "I assure you, Socrates, if I must speak the truth, that a beautiful maiden is a beauty." This reply clarifies the point of departure in the analysis of the beautiful: its concrete quality. However, beauty is not only concrete and individual but is a characteristic of whole categories of phenomena.

Socrates stresses this idea saying, "Is not a beautiful mare a beauty ... but what about a beautiful lyre ... what about a beautiful pot? ... Is not that a beauty?"

He gradually brings Hippias to the conclusion that the beautiful is something individual inherent in a multitude, something concrete which is nevertheless universal. To Hippias, it seems awkward to mention a beautiful woman and a beautiful pot in a single breath, but Socrates draws his attention to the relativity of the beautiful: to determine the measure of the object's beauty, a comparison with other objects is necessary. Socrates quotes Heraclitus, who said, "...the most beautiful of apes is ugly compared with the human race.... The wisest of men, when compared to a god, will appear but an ape in wisdom and beauty and all else".

In an attempt to find absolute beauty, Hippias suggests that this may be a property of gold, "For I suppose we all know that if anything has gold added to it, it will appear beautiful when so adorned even though it appeared obly before." But Socrates objects that Phidias has carved a beautiful sculpture of Athena not out of gold but of ivory. Moreover, to supplement a clay pot, a fig spoon is beautiful while a gold one is ugly. But in that case the beautiful is the humdrum routine, the normal, the common, the age-old and sanctified by tradition? Hippias says, "Then I maintain that always, everywhere, and for every man it is most beautiful to be rich, healthy, honoured by the Greeks, to

reach old age and, after burying his parents nobly, himself to be borne to the tomb with solemn ceremony by his own children." Socrates however notes that this does not embrace the exceptional: heroes born from immortal gods or the gods themselves.

Finally, a definition is worked out: the beautiful is that which is beneficial, useful and has power to produce something good. But Socrates reminds his opponent, however, that there are things which are quite useful for perpetrating an evil deed, and these are far removed from the beautiful. Is not then the beautiful that which is useful for a good deed, i.e. the useful itself? This supposition, introducing a utilitarian element into the definition of beauty, is also rejected. "It looks as if the view which a little while ago we thought the finest result of our discussions, the view that the beneficial, and the useful, and the power to produce something good, is beautiful, is in fact wrong..."¹ A new, sensualist approach to the beautiful emerges, which explains the significance of the latter as a source of pleasure: "Beauty is the pleasant which comes through the senses of hearing and sight", while the designation "beautiful" is denied "to that which is pleasant according to the other senses, that is, the senses which have to do with food, and drink, and sexual intercourse, and all such things". Further on, Plato draws a line between physical and spiritual beauty; using Socrates as his mouthpiece, he also poses very reasonable questions: what about brilliant actions and laws? Hearing and vision have nothing to do with the pleasure one derives from these.

Further still, he tries to blend the utilitarian, the sensualist and the ethical definitions: "beauty is that which is both useful and powerful for some good purpose". But Plato makes a distinction between the good and the beautiful. His Socrates says, "Then most certainly beauty is not good nor the good beautiful".

The dispute between Hippias and Socrates does not evolve a final definition of beauty, which does not at all mean that it was theoretically fruitless. In the course of it, a comprehensive and dialectical analysis of the beautiful is made, while the final result of the dispute is summed up by its last phrase: "All that is beautiful is difficult."

In *Philebus*, Plato says, "I do not mean by beauty of form such beauty as that of animals or pictures, which the many would suppose to be my meaning; but... understand me to mean straight lines and circles, and the plane or solid figures which are formed out of them by turning-lathes and rulers and measures of angles; for these I affirm to be not only relatively beautiful, like

other things, but they are eternally and absolutely beautiful, and they have peculiar pleasures..." Plato looks for beauty in solids, in the quality of being proportionate. In the final analysis, Plato's beauty is a specific aesthetic idea man can grasp only in a state of obsession or inspiration, through the memories the immortal soul has of the time when it has not yet inhabited the mortal body but existed in the world of ideas.

Noting the beauty of a concrete object, Plato listens as it were to that which emerges in the soul of man in the presence of beauty. He was the first to treat the beautiful as the product of man's *aesthetic and spiritual relation* to the object and not as an innate property of objects. This interpretation of the beautiful points to its suprasensual nature. However, Plato sees the source of this quality of the beautiful not in social life or history but in the primacy of the spiritual.

The most valuable part of Plato's doctrine is its detailed characteristic of beauty and the idea that aesthetic experience has features which are all its own: contemplation of the beautiful is the source of a number of unique "pleasures".

Hegel noted in his lectures on the history of philosophy that the very trend of Plato's discussion concerning the beautiful and its qualities shows that Plato gave a dialectical interpretation of the beautiful as the product of man's spiritual, specifically human approach to the world.

As distinct from Plato, Aristotle regarded the beautiful not as an objective idea but as an objective property of things, saying that "beauty is a matter of size and order". "To be beautiful, a living creature, and every whole made of parts, must not only present a certain order in its arrangement of parts, but also to be of a certain definite magnitude." Here, Aristotle gives a *structural* characteristic of beauty stressing the size, proportions and order as the elements of the beautiful. Developing the Pythagorean tradition, Aristotle maintained that these properties can be assessed with the help of mathematics.

Aristotle suggested the principle of comparability of man and a beautiful object, saying that beauty is "impossible either 1) in a very minute creature, since our perception becomes indistinct as it approaches instantaneity; or 2) in a creature of vast size ...as in that case, instead of the object being seen all at once, the unity and wholeness of it is lost to the beholder".

According to Aristotle, the beautiful should be neither too small nor too large. This seemingly naive idea is nevertheless that of a genius. Beauty becomes a *measure*, and the measure of all things is man. It is in comparison with man

that the beautiful object should not be out of proportion.

Aristotle's doctrine of beauty theoretically corresponded to the humanitarian character of the art of classical antiquity. As distinct from a pyramid, the Parthenon is neither too small nor too large; it is small enough not to overwhelm man but large enough to convey the greatness of the Athenians who created it.

In the Middle Ages, the dominating doctrine was that of the divine origin of beauty (Thomas Aquinas, Tertullian, Francis of Assisi): animating the inert matter, god renders it aesthetic. Sensual beauty was looked upon as sinful; enjoyment of it was prohibited. The humanists of the Renaissance (Leonardo da Vinci, Shakespeare) glorified the beauty of nature and the joy it gives man. They regarded art as a mirror used by the artist to reflect nature. The aestheticians of classicism (Boileau) reduced the beautiful to the refined; not all flowering and luxuriant nature was considered beautiful but only the trimmed and groomed part of it, like, for instance, Versailles. Classicists insisted that the sublime object of art was beauty in social life seen as goodness and state expediency.

French Enlighteners (Voltaire, Diderot *et al*) expanded the realm of the beautiful, once more granting it to life in all its manifestations. For them, beauty was an innate property of nature itself, like weight, colour, size, etc. The German classical aesthetics introduced a number of dialectical ideas into the notion of the nature of the beautiful. Kant said that beauty was an object of a *disinterested* relationship. Hegel's approach was the *historic* one. He saw the beautiful as a stage in the evolution of the Universal Spirit (the Absolute Idea). In the course of it, the Spirit is harmoniously united with the material form; the idea finds a complete and adequate expression in the form, and that is beautiful. Such state was attained by the Absolute Idea in the art of classical antiquity (Ancient Greece). For Hegel, beauty lies in the realm of art.

Nikolai Chernyshevsky, the Russian aesthetician, maintained that beauty is life as it should be. His doctrine treats beauty materialistically. At the same time, it bears a stamp of anthropologism: Chernyshevsky thought that beauty in nature anticipated man.

In the late 19th-early 20th century, aesthetics in Western Europe was dominated by subjective idealism. It maintained that in the process of aesthetic perception man spiritualises the aesthetically neutral world, making it emanate beauty. Only man can introduce beauty into nature, which, taken by itself, lies beyond the realm of the beautiful or the ugly and is outside aesthetics, morals or logic.

Nature is beautiful only if aesthetic perception has made it so. From the aesthetic point of view, it is rich only in that which has been lent to it by art.

Paradigms of Theoretical Perception of Beauty

Each of the numerous concepts of the beautiful advanced in the history of aesthetics leans towards one of the theoretical models which have been discussed above. In other words, they can all be reduced to five paradigms.

Paradigm 1 (Plato, Tertullian, Thomas Aquinas, Francis of Assisi, Hegel): beauty is a manifestation of god (or the Absolute Idea) in concrete objects and phenomena.

Paradigm 2: life is aesthetically neutral, the source of its beauty is in the soul of man (Ch. Lalo, Theodor Lipps, E. Meumann), it emerges when man lends or loans (Jean Paul), emotionally penetrates (B. Croce), or projects (N. Hartmann) his inner wealth to life; beauty is a result of the intentional (purposeful, active, conscious) perception of the object by the subject (phenomenologists).

Paradigm 3 (Socrates, Aristotle, Chernyshevsky): beauty appears when the various aspects of life are brought into correlation with man as the measure of beauty or with his practical needs, ideals and ideas of life as it should be.

Paradigm 4 (French materialists): beauty is the natural property of objects and phenomena.

Paradigm 5 (Soviet aestheticians): beauty is a quality of objectively existing phenomena with their natural properties which have been involved by social production and human activity into the sphere of man's interests and acquired a positive value for man as a race. They have been spiritualised and humanised by labour becoming the realm of freedom, i.e. the field where man is the master of life. Let us analyse the principal theoretical ideas of this fundamentally new approach to the problem of the beautiful.

We perceive the harmony and symmetry in the world around us as beauty. They lie, as it were, in the very foundation of matter.

Particles and antiparticles in the microcosm form the basis of the structure of an atom. Antiparticles are mirror reflections of particles. This essential property of matter – the harmony and symmetry of its structure – is repeated in a leaf of a tree, the build of various animals, and the human face. This essential property of the world, its material

nature, the overall connection and interaction of its phenomena, comprises *the natural basis* of the beautiful. With the infinite variety and multitude of phenomena, they are correlated and linked with each other by millions of ties,

and are adjusted to each other, and can therefore become the objects of study. Exploring the world, man is naturally guided by its properties and the laws governing it. The interaction of nature and society, which is the result of labour and production, creates beauty as the world's objective quality, as *the value of its objects for humanity* and as a sphere where man has mastered the world and is therefore free.

The first objects of man's aesthetic relation to the world were the tools he used. Man derived pleasure from a well-made tool whose shape suited its function and purpose. Labour itself became a source of aesthetic enjoyment which aroused man's pride, joy and amazement at his own capacity for creating. As human activities grew more varied, the range of aesthetic values also expanded. Man began to aesthetically appreciate nature, himself and the society he lived in. That which for a tribe was useful, desirable and important, that which symbolised power and wealth was considered beautiful. *Labour is older than art. Utilitarian views were the first to be acquired by man, and it is only later that he came to form aesthetic views on the basis of utilitarian ones.* It is labour that bears the stamp of the aesthetic. In contrast to the activities of animals, it is concerned with creative transformation of life. Animals create unconsciously, by force of biological necessity and according to the needs of the species they belong to. Building a dam, a beaver has no preconceived plan of construction but acts instinctively. Man creates consciously, first drawing up a plan and finally arriving at the result which corresponds to his intention. Using the natural properties of phenomena for his purpose he establishes himself in the world through material and spiritual values produced by labour.

Karl Marx wrote, "An animal forms objects only in accordance with the standard and the need of the species to which it belongs, whilst man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere the inherent standard to the object. Man therefore also forms objects in accordance with the laws of beauty."²

What is then the measure which is inherent in the object? It is not the natural laws which govern the development of matter organised by the presence of an inner purpose, for nature does not have a purpose. *Carving La petite fee des eaux* out of marble, Rodin did not act according to the logical idea which marble as a natural material possesses. No purposeful evolution of marble outside society and human activity would be able to engender either a purpose or measure that would allow a block of marble to become a sculpture in the hands of man. Rodin created his piece by "cutting off everything

superfluous", which was a search for precisely that inner measure of the natural material in its correlation to the social needs of man. That block of marble could not have been used to make a teaspoon or an ingot mould – in either case, the use of the natural material would not have corresponded to its measure.

Measure is the result of the discovery by man, in the course of his exploration of the world, of the object's inner potential for serving man and satisfying his needs.

The Beautiful as a Positive Universal Human Value

Only those natural properties of an object engender beauty which are correlated in the process of social production to man's needs and are determined by the level of social development. Beauty is *objective*, for it depends not on its perception by an individual but on *the actual value of the object for man*. This aesthetic quality is social, for it is determined by production which involves the whole world into the field of human activity and puts every object into a *certain relation to man*. Thus *beauty is the broadest positive social significance of a phenomenon, its positive value for the human race*. The beautiful does imply that an object has been "*spiritualised*", but not by the Absolute Idea or an individual, but by society and its productive activity. Social production has made nature "the non-organic body of man" and left a stamp of the personality of modern man on the objects of the outside world; production has turned this world into a real embodiment of man's essential powers. Social production has embraced all the visible world; at present, all its phenomena have either been transformed by man's activity which has turned them into the "second nature", or are being explored, or form the arsenal of man's future and more impressive power. No phenomena exist which are of no consequence to society and are not correlated to society. This is where the "spirituality" of phenomena and their aesthetic qualities stem from. To make the world the kingdom of beauty means to spiritualise and humanise it.

Finally, the beautiful is the *realm of man's freedom*. It is phenomena which have been cognised and explored. They contain nothing frightening or repulsive: man has mastered them and is therefore free where his relationship with them is concerned. It should be stressed that here, no personal rule over the phenomenon is implied but only man's rule as a race, the rule determined by the development of social production.

Beauty in the life of society is manifested in political and social freedom; in nature – in man's free mastery over the object (the ability to understand, master, create, make); and in art or sports in possessing effortless skill.

Beauty is *a product of history*. The phenomena reflecting the mastery of man over the material world which is maximal at a given level of social development are considered beautiful. Free mastery over the powers of nature and the knowledge how to make their laws and properties serve a practical purpose give man high aesthetic pleasure.

The sum total of the definitions given above is necessary and sufficient for a characteristic of the nature and essence of the beautiful as a key category of the aesthetics. It shows that there is no difference of principle between the aesthetic properties of natural and of social phenomena. In both cases, these properties have *an objective-material, social substance*.

However, beauty in the life of society is the most complicated and delicate matter. Here, "the crystal lattice" of a beautiful structure is formed not by atoms but by people and their lives. It is no accident that the most elevated realm of aesthetic cognition of the world according to the laws of the beautiful is art as a social phenomenon. It remakes the experience of life into beauty. No matter whether the artist is concerned with suffering, heroic deeds, ugliness or comic occurrences, his work is a source of aesthetic delight.

Soren A. Kierkegaard, the 19th-century Danish philosopher, gave a graphic characteristic of a poet: a deeply unhappy individual whose heart is filled with suffering but whose lips are formed in such a way that when a groan escapes them it turns into beautiful music. This image is a new interpretation, as it were, of an old Greek legend.

The sculptor Pericles presented a tyrant with a gigantic bronze ox. A man sentenced to death was placed inside it, and a fire was laid under the belly of the monster. The ox's throat and mouth were made in such a way that the agonised yells and groans of the dying man were transformed into melodious sounds. By the way, one of the first to die in this fashion was the sculptor himself.

The Greeks had a gift of turning everything into beauty. Their myths are full of it. Even the Gods' revenge on Niobe is beautiful. However horrible the occasion is, it assumes a beautiful form: the arrows which killed her children are sunrays.

Beauty in art is perfection of form, depth of meaning, profound knowledge of the subject, and the consequence of the artistic idea conveyed by the work. An accurate and impassive copying of life does not produce beauty. The latter

can be attained in art only by a creative approach to life."You are not a lowly copyist but a poet! " wrote Honore de Balzac."Otherwise the sculptor would have done his job by making a plaster cast of a woman. Very well, try then to make a plaster cast of the arm of the woman you love and place it before yourself – you will see an arm of a corpse without the slightest resemblance to the original, and will have to turn to a sculptor who, without producing an exact replica, will reproduce motion and life. We must grasp the spirit, the meaning, the characteristic shape of objects and beings."

Embodying the ideal of beauty, art awakens man's creative potential, fosters his ability to find the inner measure of objects and correlate their properties with his social needs, and teaches him to appreciate beauty and create according to its laws.

¹ This distinction between the useful and the beautiful is made by Socrates – a character in Plato's dialogue. In real life Socrates maintained that the useful is beautiful for that for which it is useful.

² Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol.3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p.277.

AESTHETICS: THE AXIOLOGY OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES

Aesthetics: The Branch of Knowledge Dealing with the Aesthetic Diversity of Life and Art

THE SUBLIME

The Sublime in the History of Aesthetics

The sublime first came to man's attention not as an aesthetic category but as a figure of speech. In the 1st century A. D., Caecilius, a pupil of the famous Greek rhetorician Apollodorus born in the Sicilian town of Kalakty, wrote a treatise *On the Sublime* where he discussed the laws of the sublime and the oratorical devices and classified figures of speech and tropes. The stylistic principles of oratory advanced by Caecilius could be easily extended to literature, which was strongly affected by rhetoric. Caecilius' treatise has not come down to us, but we can form an idea as to its contents from a few extant fragments and criticism to be found in works by other authors. There exists an anonymous treatise *On the Sublime* which was written as a reply to Caecilius' effort but far outgrew its immediate purpose. Most probably, it was also produced in the 1st century A. D. For a long time, it was ascribed to Longinus, but recent research has proved this wrong, and the author came to be known as Pseudo-Longinus.

The latter adhered to Caecilius' concept of the sublime as a feature of style¹ but interpreted it more broadly, i.e., as an aesthetic category. He considered the best works of literature to be the domain of the sublime. Naming the major spiritual sources of the sublime (original ideas, extraordinary passions, the beauty of speech combined with greatness of thought), Pseudo-Longinus said that the sublime was far removed from the bustle of everyday life, petty vanity, the desire to dominate: "Such are Riches, Dignities, Honour, Power, and those other specious, and as it were, theatrical Things, which, notwithstanding all their outward Pomp, will never be esteemed real and substantial Goods in the Judgement of a wise Man. On the contrary, no greater Good can accrue to us, than to be able to despise them: and therefore we let's admire those, who actually possess them, than those who, when they have it in their Power to do so, reject them with a noble Disdain and Greatness of Soul."²

Pseudo-Longinus saw the sublime as a powerful natural force reflecting the greatness of god which had a profound philosophical meaning and could help solve the problem of the meaning of life. "Nature did not regard Man as a

Creature of a low and mean Condition; but sent him into Life and this World, as into a vast Amphitheatre, to be a Spectator of all that pass'd; the enter'd him, I say, in those Lists, as a valiant Candidate, who was to breathe nothing but Glory; and therefore inspir'd his Soul with a strong and invincible Passion for every Thing that was most great and divine: Hence is it, that the whole World is not capacious enough for the extensive Contemplations of the Human Mind, and that our Thoughts soar above the Heavens and penetrate even beyond those Boundaries which encircle and terminate the Universe."³ According to Pseudo-Longinus, the sublime renders man the greatness of god, gives him immortality and leaves a strong and indelible imprint on his memory. People do not feel they are in the presence of the sublime when they see a brook no matter how clear and useful it may be, but are profoundly impressed by the sight of the Nile, Danube or Rhine, and particularly of the ocean. A volcanic eruption is also perceived as sublime. In 1757, Edmund Burke, the English theorist, published *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, which was the first work to draw a contrast between these two categories. In Burke's opinion, the ideas of the sublime and of the beautiful were so different that it was difficult and even impossible to blend them in a single emotion.

Kant propounded a subjectivist point of view on the sublime: it is a property not of any object or nature but of one's soul only. He thought that the sublime now attracted, now repelled, exciting not positive pleasure but amazement and reverence, which can be called negative pleasure. The sublime is man's pride which emerges when faith helps him to overcome fear. The sound aspect of Kant's theory is the idea that a sublime phenomenon is grand and incomprehensible, and that man cannot feel free when in contact with something which is sublime; hence the need to overcome fear, hence attraction and repulsion, amazement and negative delight.

The sublime and the beautiful were opposed by Friedrich Schiller, the German poet and art theorist, who said that as distinct from the beautiful, the sublime is a source of unpleasant sensations; as an instance, he gave a raging thunderstorm.

The history of aesthetics has also evolved a theory bringing together the beautiful and the sublime. French aestheticians of the 19th century maintained that the sublime was the crown of the beautiful (E. Souriau, Th. Gouffroy), or the beautiful "in itself", the infinite beauty which cannot be comprehended (Ch. Leveque).

Hegel saw in the sublime the stage in the evolution of the Absolute Spirit, or

of world historical process, matched by romantic art, in which the spirit or content prevails over matter or form. The romantic period was most adequately represented by music and poetry, the most spiritual of all arts, which are almost totally divorced from material. It is for that reason that the element of the sublime is particularly strong in poetry and music.

Nikolai Chernyshevsky sought to find the material basis of the sublime and bring it down to earth. He believed that the sublime was more powerful and grand than other phenomena it was compared to. A gust of wind during a thunderstorm which is a hundred times stronger than usual winds or a love which rises above petty calculations and motives are both instances of the sublime. The sublime is revealed through a comparison with other phenomena. The definition of the sublime suggested by Chernyshevsky is a quantitative, not a qualitative one; besides, it is too broad and therefore not accurate enough. As he himself noted, one man may have a huge appetite as compared to others, but this does not make his personality sublime. And yet, Chernyshevsky's definition is valuable as the one which treats the sublime materialistically.

The German philosopher N. Hartmann approached the sublime from the point of view of perception. For him, it is the beautiful which satisfies man's craving for the grand and the magnificent. Anything immensely powerful frightens and subdues man. Perceiving the sublime, he resists its impact overcoming the feeling of his own insignificance.

To sum up. The history of aesthetics has produced two points of view on the relationship between the beautiful and the sublime: (1) the sublime is the crown of the beautiful, a special kind of the beautiful marked by greatness or force; (2) the beautiful and the sublime are opposites; perception of the latter produces an aesthetically negative reaction. However, both approaches are one-sided. To overcome this deficiency, it is necessary to define the sublime using the sound element of both theories.

The Nature of the Sublime

If the beautiful can be defined as a positive universal human value of the phenomena which have already been thoroughly understood and utilised by society, the sublime is the aesthetic property of objects which have positive value for society but also possess an enormous unexplored potential. Their unconquered power may at times become menacing. Full mastery of such phenomena is a thing of the future when the potential and the sources of

man's strength will be developed more fully. *The infinity and eternity of the world, the enormous inner power of nature and man, unlimited prospects for the exploration of nature and its humanisation-all this is a manifestation of the sublime as a category of aesthetics.*

Perceiving sublime phenomena in nature and society, man experiences delight which may be mixed with an aesthetically negative emotion and even fear. Depending on the relative prominence of delight or fear, two types of the sublime can be singled out: that which enhances the power of man and that which reduces it. What is then the value of the mountains, oceans or cosmos if they have not yet been explored? Human activity involves these objects into social relations. They play the part of the natural environment, an inexhaustible treasurehouse of nature which will forever be a source of man's power and greatness. Even when destroying and bringing misery to people, natural forces are not devoid of potential positive value for the human race. As society advances and man gets nearer to mastering them, they lose their fearsome characteristics, and it becomes clear that despite their immensity they are really friendly towards man. As soon as a powerful and grand natural phenomenon becomes involved, even indirectly, into the system of social relations, it becomes sublime. When a phenomenon is fully understood and mastered, its aesthetic qualities undergo a change.

In the course of the social development, the realm of the beautiful is expanded through addition of sublime phenomena. And since the increase in the store of knowledge opens up fresh prospects for exploration and at the same time shows how insufficient the already accumulated knowledge is, transformation of the sublime into the beautiful enhances the range of sublime phenomena, paradoxical though this may seem.

The sublime is colossal, enormous, powerful and is beyond the potential of modern man. Facing and resisting those formidable forces, gradually bending them to his will, man becomes related with eternity acquiring immortality on this earth, which rests on action and creation.

The sublime in the life of society is represented by man's big technical projects, powerful social movements, or creative work which involves a great number of people and yields great results. The full significance of such phenomena can be revealed only in the course of life of several generations. In other words, the great scale and power of these products of man's creation make it possible to master them only as a result of a whole historical process. *The sublime is an objective aesthetic property of objects and phenomena which have considerable positive social significance affecting the life of nations or mankind as a*

whole. Owing to their colossal power and enormous scope, it is often impossible to get to understand them completely and promptly; therefore, in relation to them man is not free. The beautiful is the realm of man's freedom, and the sublime – the realm in which man does not feel free.

The Sublime in Art

The grand and the magnificent are best adapted to convey the sublime in art. The Greeks considered Zeus the king of gods. In the temples dedicated to him and in his sculptural portraits this principle has found the most complete and striking expression. The Temple of Zeus in Olympia was destroyed by an earthquake. Centuries flew over its ruins, but the remains of the magnificent columns never fail to excite admiration even now. However, the secret of the temple's impact on man does not lie solely in its size. In antiquity, its interior was adorned by a colossal statue of enthroned Zeus. The height of the statue was such that if Zeus could have risen to his full height, his powerful head would have gone through the temple's roof. The correlation between the sizes of the statue and the temple was one of the reasons for the general impression the whole structure produced. It seemed to say: the man who has built this splendid temple is indeed great, but Zeus is incomparably more so: he needs only to stand up, and the building will tumble down. Awareness of having mastered certain forces of nature and dependence on others is clearly perceptible in the very idea of this ensemble which gave the impression of beauty and sublimity.

The beauty of Greek architecture is very humane. It has what Aristotle called measure: the buildings are neither too large nor too small and are calculated to put man at his ease. Parthenon, for instance, is grand enough to assert man's greatness but not so grand as to belittle him. The pyramids of Egypt are on the contrary truly grandiose. Asserting the greatness of the pharaoh, they overwhelmed the individual who, seen against the background of that colossal edifice, seemed a total nonentity in comparison with eternity, the idea of which was conveyed through the size of the pyramid. The functionality of the pyramids was negligible, which also emphasised the inhuman character of their grandeur.

The Middle Ages evolved a religious and mystical idea of the sublime identifying it with god. This doctrine found material expression in Gothic architecture. Soaring upwards, Gothic cathedrals personified the link between man's hopes and god. They convey a desire to attain the ideal, that almost

unattainable perfection which nevertheless lies within man's reach if only he tries hard enough. Enormously tall, Gothic cathedrals have the narrow deep wells of naves lit with the mysteriously glimmering light coming through stained-glass windows. The subdued light, the aura of mystery and the rush heavenwards combined to produce the effect of unreality far removed from the humdrum existence.

A typical Renaissance image of the sublime is Michelangelo's David. The young man is portrayed in the last minutes before his fight with Goliath, before the final straining of every nerve and sinew. He is absolutely still. His muscles are relaxed under the youthfully soft skin. But behind this purely physiological state is a suggestion of man's potential power, which has yet to reveal itself.⁴ It is on the verge of bursting forth, the very image of the sublime-the beauty which is right here but does not yet quite obey man.

In *King Lear*, Shakespeare developed the theme of true and sham grandeur. King Lear had power, but its might was ephemeral; guided by whim alone, he was neither kind nor just but capricious and vain. His soul was blind: he mistook the meaningless hyperboles of his eldest daughters for love, while Cordelia's silent adoration he considered coldness and callousness. Betrayed by those who professed to love him so much, he finds himself lost in the wilderness. A storm is raging. Blinded by lightning, mad with grief, clad in tatters, deprived of the ephemeral grandeur of despotic power, the old man acquires a humane view of things and with it, true power. The persecuted king demonstrates the force of human spirit. He faces misfortune with dignity and, alongside with the understanding of genuine human values, gains something more than power over people – the ability to control his own passions, moral insight.

More recent art has given a striking portrayal of the sublime in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. Soft and muted in the beginning, the sound grows gradually stronger, reaches a crescendo and suddenly explodes. Then all is quiet again, but enormous energy is being accumulated whose sparks flash out, go out again, and all of a sudden a powerful wave bursts forth sweeping everything away as it advances. The symphony reflects the latent force of historical events which involve enormous numbers of people.

In contrast to Beethoven, Mozart's music is homely and comfortable, it radiates light and is warmed by tremulous human breath. His world is a harmoniously rounded whole. It resembles that crystal tinkling sphere which, as Greek natural philosophers believed, surrounded each planet. It is a thoroughly familiar and friendly world which contains nothing frightening,

nothing supernatural. Mozart can be graceful, refined and gay, or sad and even mournful, but invariably beautiful. The world of Beethoven is grandiose and infinite. His music is sudden, unexpected: the soft murmuring and cooing sounds, tempestuous explosions, the whispers of love, and the roar of global cataclysms. The epoch of revolutionary upheavals has stormed its way into music and changed it. Beethoven's approach to both human life and nature is cosmic and sublime.

To convey the sublime in art, the artist has to find particularly vivid means of expression resorting to the elevated style. Preparatory materials for Pushkin's poem *Poltava* contain his description of the battle written with calm detachment of a historian: "Peter and his generals went round the troops, encouraging soldiers and officers, and led them against the enemy. Charles set out to meet them; at a little after 8 o'clock, the troops engaged in combat. The whole thing lasted less than two hours – the Swedes fled.

"On the site of the battle, 9,234 dead were counted. Golikov thinks the number of those killed reached 20,000, the field was littered with corpses for three miles around. Lowenhaupt and the rest fled, leaving their effects behind and stabbing the wounded. The number of those who fled was up to 16,000, and including the people of different stations-24,000". The facts and figures here give an idea of the scope of the battle, but the description does not give any impression of sublimity.

Here is the description of the same battle in the poem itself. Selecting exulting terms belonging to the elevated style, Pushkin portrays Peter and creates an impressive picture of the battle:

*"Inspired by Heaven, now there sounded
The voice of Peter, rich and loud:
'Begin with God's help! 'By a crowd
Of favourites and friends surrounded,
He steps forth from his tent. His eyes
Blaze, and his stern face lighting, lend it
An awesomeness. He's swift, he's splendid!
God's storm is he in human guise."
"And the Poltava fray began!
A terse command. Fierce fire! Shelling!
All stand together to a man.
A living wall a hail repelling
Of searing lead! Fresh ranks link steel
Above the fallen. Horsemen winging*

*Like dark clouds o'er the plain. Their singing
Swords clash... Swedes, Russians heel to heel;
They cut and smite and slash. The beating
Of drums, a call to arms repeating.
Guns roar. Steeds neigh. Men moan. Hoofs pound.
A hell on earth, death all around.* ⁵

The sublime events of our epoch require particularly vivid artistic devices.

¹ Giving his magnum opus the name *The Divine Comedy*, Dante also proceeded from the tradition established by Pseudo-Longinus of dividing creative art into stylistically sublime and base.

² *Epistles, Odes*, op. cit., p.153.

³ *Ibid.*, p.231.

⁴ Another version exists which, however, does not make the present interpretation impossible: David is shown immediately after the fight. Goliath is dead, but David is not triumphant. He has only done his duty and is looking sadly at the defeated enemy.

⁵ "Poltava", excerpts. Translated by *Irina Zheleznova* – Ed.

AESTHETICS: THE AXIOLOGY OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES

Aesthetics: The Branch of Knowledge Dealing with the Aesthetic Diversity of Life and Art

THE TRAGIC

Tragedy: an Irreplaceable Loss and a Declaration of Immortality

Man is mortal; consequently, the meaning of life, death and immortality are questions which cannot but profoundly concern him and to which he has always given a great deal of thought. The history of mankind abounds in tragic events. In its philosophical interpretation of life, art has a natural leaning towards the tragic. In other words, both the individual, society and art are repeatedly faced with the problem of the tragic.

The 20th century has witnessed major social cataclysms: revolutions, wars, crises and drastic changes which have frequently resulted in complications and tension. Therefore, for our contemporaries, the theoretical analysis of the problem of the tragic is in a sense self-analysis and a way of understanding life. The other side of the condition of the world is the domain of the aesthetic category of the comic. The genius of Charlie Chaplin has found both a comic and a tragic expression. A blend of the two probably gives the best idea of the spirit of our epoch. It is no accident that the works of art which deserve to represent our age to posterity are either comic or tragic. Suffice it to recollect the works of Remain Rolland, Mikhail Sholokhov, Mikhail Bulgakov, Bertolt Brecht, Thomas Mann, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Sergei Eisenstein, Pablo Picasso, Dmitry Shostakovich, Sergei Prokofiev, or Gustav Mahler.

The aesthetic structure of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 can be described by the formula "suffering – death – grief – joy", which is a *typical* one for tragic art.

The transition from grief to joy is one of the great secrets of the tragic. In his treatise *Of Tragedy* David Hume pointed out that the tragic emotion has an element of grief, joy, horror and pleasure. To explain the nature of this phenomenon, one should go back to the historical sources of the tragic in art. The ancient peoples whose economy rested on agriculture created legends about the gods who died and then rose from the dead; Dionysus in Greece, Osiris in Egypt, Adonis in Phoenicia, Attis in Asia Minor, and Marduk in Babylon. During the religious festivals in their honour, the grief caused by their death was succeeded by the joy of their resurrection. These legends arose

from observations of a seed which "dies" when buried in the earth and "rises" in the form of a shoot.¹ As social contradictions grew more acute, the naturalistic basis of such myths became more involved acquiring a clearly social character: the death and resurrection of the god was linked up to the hope for deliverance from suffering after death and for eternal life (the legends about Christ).

*The inevitability of the tragic in the realm of events was expressed in the transition from death to resurrection, and in the realm of emotions – from grief to joy. The tragic emotion – a blend of sorrow and supreme joy – is present in the art of very different peoples. Cases in point are the tragic pageants of the Eskimos, the ancient Korean tale *Sim Chen*, and the Bantu legend *The Seven Heroes and Seven Birds*. Ancient Indian aesthetics conveyed this regularity through the notion of *samsara*, which means the rotation of life and death, reincarnation of the dead into other living beings depending on the sort of life the person had led. The idea of the transmigration of the soul was connected in ancient Indians with the idea of aesthetic improvement, a rise to the more beautiful. *The Veda*, one of the earliest Indian literary works, asserted the beauty of life after death and the joy of entering the other world. The ancient Mexicans were also convinced that there is life after death, but believed that the fate of the deceased depended not on his morals while still alive but on the manner in which he died.*

From the earliest times, man refused to accept the idea of non-being: pondering on death, he always arrived at the idea of immortality; the realm of non-being was the fate of evil, and its departure there was accompanied by laughter. A paradox: death became the domain of satire, not tragedy. Satire proved the mortality of the living and even victorious evil, while tragedy asserted immortality and revealed the beauty and goodness of man which triumphed even if the hero was dead. *Tragedy is a mournful song about an irreplaceable loss and a joyous hymn to the immortality of man.* The essence of the tragic is shown when sorrow is supplanted by joy, and death by immortality. In ancient legends, which lie at the sources of the tragic in art, the idea of immortality finds expression in the belief that there is life after death and that the dead hero will rise again. This doctrine has a profound philosophical and aesthetic meaning: immortality does exist on Earth. Man continues to live in the fruit of his work and in the memory and deeds of his people. That is the idea behind the myths about resurrection. A tragic work of art portrays those features of the personality which live on in mankind.

The Universal Philosophical Aspects of the Tragic

Man leaves life forever. Death is the transformation of the living into the non-living. However, the dead continue to live through the living: culture preserves all that has passed, it is mankind's non-genetic memory. Each man is a whole Universe. Heinrich Heine said that each tombstone conceals the history of a whole world which cannot disappear without leaving a trace. Treating the death of a unique individual as an irreparable destruction of a whole world, tragedy at the same time asserts the stability and infinity of the universe despite the departure from it of a finite being. In this being itself, tragedy finds grains of immortality which link the individual with the universe, the finite with the infinite. *Tragedy is a philosophical art which poses and solves metaphysical problems of life, tries to grasp its meaning, and analyses global problems.*

Hegel maintained that in a tragedy, death means not merely annihilation but also perpetuation in a modified form of that which is doomed to extinction in a certain form. He contrasted a person weighed down by the instinct of self-preservation to a person who is free from "slave psychology" and is capable of sacrificing his life for a worthy cause. The ability to grasp the idea of infinite evolution was for Hegel an important characteristic of human consciousness. Two extreme positions have been evolved by world art when treating tragic situations: existentialist and Buddhist.

Existentialism regards death as the central problem of philosophy and art. Asserting the independent value of the individual, existentialists end up with a paradox: death of the individual ceases to be a social problem. If the individual is alienated from the rest of the people, what do they care about his death? Face to face with the universe, utterly alone, the individual is horror-stricken at the thought that existence is necessarily finite. Despite all his independent value, he turns out to be an absurd figure whose life is devoid of meaning or value.

Buddhism maintains that after death man becomes another being. While existentialism puts a sign of equality between life and death (life and death are equally absurd), the ideology of Buddhism puts a sign of equality between death and life (dying, the man goes on living; therefore his death does not really change anything). In both cases, the tragic is sublated. The death of the individual is perceived as a tragic event only if man whose independent value is beyond a doubt lives for people and if their interests are the meaning of his life. In that case, on the one hand, there is the uniqueness and value of the

individual, but on the other, the dying hero continues to live through the life of his people. His death is therefore perceived as an irreplaceable loss of a unique personality (hence the grief), but at the same time the idea emerges of man's immortality attained in the life of mankind (hence the joy).

The sources of the tragic are certain social contradictions, e.g. the confrontation of the historically inevitable and the temporary impossibility of its realisation. Inadequate knowledge or ignorance are often a source of great tragedies. The tragic has to do with the universal problems of existence and seeks to find a way out for mankind. It deals not merely with individual misfortunes caused by accident but with global disasters and fundamental imperfections of existence which affect the fate of the individual.

The Tragic in Art

Each epoch makes a contribution to the tragic in art, and each concentrates on the aspects which appealed to it most. The tragic hero possesses something which goes beyond the boundaries of individual existence, he is endowed with power, a certain demoniacal force, he is the carrier of a principle. In ancient tragedy, heroes often had the gift of prescience. Prophecies, predictions, dreams and premonitions coming from gods and oracles were a natural element of the tragedy. The Greeks managed to make their tragedies entertaining even in spite of the fact that both the characters and the spectators were either informed of the will of the gods, or the chorus foretold the course of events. Besides, Greek tragedies were usually based on myths which the Greeks knew very well indeed. Greek tragedy thrilled not so much by an unexpected turn of events as by the logic of these events. The message of the whole lay not in the unavoidable and fateful denouement but in the hero's actions. *What* was happening was important, but *how* it was happening was more important still. The motive forces of the plot and the results of the hero's actions were laid bare.

In Ancient Greek tragedy, the hero acted within the boundaries of the inevitable. He was powerless to prevent that which was imminent, but he acted all the same, and thus the plot was unfolded. It was not fate which carried the hero to the finale; his tragic destiny was his own doing. Take Oedipus in Sophocles' *Oedipus-Rex*. Of his own free will and as a result of a conscious decision, he discovered the causes of the misfortunes which had befallen Thebes. But this "investigation" turned against the "chief investigator": Oedipus himself had brought the disaster about by killing his

father and marrying his mother. However, even having almost arrived at the horrible truth, Oedipus did not terminate his investigation but brought it to a conclusion. He was free in his actions even if he realised that his death was inevitable. Oedipus is not a doomed person but a hero who acts independently and is guided by the will of the gods and that which has to be. Greek tragedy is *heroic*. Aeschylus's Prometheus performed a heroic feat giving man fire, and was punished for it. The chorus sings glorifying the heroic in Prometheus:

*Your heart is brave, you never will
Give in to grave misfortunes.*

The purpose of Ancient Greek tragedy is catharsis (purgation of the spectator).

In the Middle Ages, tragedy was regarded not as heroism but as *martyrdom*. It revealed the presence of the supernatural, its purpose was to comfort. Unlike Prometheus, the tragedy of Christ is not that of a hero but that of a martyr. Mediaeval Christian tragedy emphasised suffering. Its central characters are martyrs. It is the tragedy not of purification but of consolation: the idea of catharsis is alien to it. The legend about Tristram and Isolde ends, characteristically, by an appeal to all who have been unhappy in their passion: be consoled for unfaithfulness and injustice, in your disappointments and misfortunes, in all suffering brought on by love. The logic of mediaeval tragedy of consolation says: be consoled, for others have suffered more and were tormented more cruelly even though they deserved it even less than you do. That is the will of god. The tragedy promised: later, in the next world... Consolation in this world (you are not the only one to suffer) is enhanced by the promise of peace in afterlife (there, you will not suffer but will be given your due).

While in Ancient Greek tragedy extraordinary things happen as a matter of course, in mediaeval tragedy a place of importance belongs to the supernatural and the miraculous.

On the border between the Middle Ages and Renaissance rises the majestic figure of Dante. His interpretation of the tragic is both overshadowed by mediaeval ideas and marked by the light of hope brought by the new era. The mediaeval motive of martyrdom is still strong: Francesca and Paolo are doomed to eternal torture for their illicit love, which shook the moral foundations of their age and the whole existing order of things by trespassing

laws both of Earth and the Heavens. But missing in *The Divine Comedy* is the second cornerstone of the aesthetic system of mediaeval tragedy: the miraculous and the supernatural. It has rather the intrinsic ordinariness of the supernatural and the real quality of unreality (the topography of Hell and the hellish vortex whirling the lovers are real enough) typical of the tragedy of classical antiquity. It is this return to antiquity adapted to an entirely different historical situation that makes Dante one of the first to express the ideas of the Renaissance.

Dante is much more openly compassionate towards Francesca and Paolo than the unknown author of *Tristram and Isolde* towards his heroes. The latter's sympathy is not really whole-hearted, he is sometimes disapproving or feels the need to justify his sympathy by supernatural reasons (the lovers have unwittingly drunk the love philter). Dante's compassion is devoid of hesitation and comes straight from the poet's heart, although he accepts the fact that the lovers deserve to suffer. The lines

*While to me thus one spirit was replying,
The other wept so, that for pitying dread
Faintness came over me as I were dying;
I fell, as falls the body of one dead*

show clearly enough that Francesca and Paolo are martyrs, not heroes, and that Dante finds their martyrdom extremely moving.

Mediaeval man explained the world through the divine. Renaissance man sought to explain it and its tragedies through the world itself. In philosophy, the classical expression of this tendency was Spinoza's thesis treating nature as *causa sui*. Art has reflected this idea even earlier. The world, including the domain of human relations, passions and tragedies, does not require a supernatural explanation; its foundation is neither fate or foreknowledge nor enchantment or witchcraft. To show the world as it really is, to explain everything by the intrinsic qualities of things, to derive everything from its own material nature – that was the spirit of the new realism which found the most complete expression in Shakespeare's tragedies.

The characters of *Romeo and Juliet* completely account for the circumstances of their lives. Their actions spring from their inner selves. The fateful words, "His name is Romeo, and a Montague, The only son of your great enemy ", do nothing to change Juliet's love. She is not bound by any external reglamentations. The sole measure and motive of her actions is her personality and her love for Romeo.

Renaissance art revealed the social essence of the tragic conflict. Describing the world, tragedy proclaimed man as a free agent and asserted his free will. It would seem that the source of Hamlet's tragedy lies in the things which have happened to him. But Laertes has gone through similar ordeals. Why then is he not perceived as a tragic hero? Laertes is passive, while Hamlet consciously confronts the hostile circumstances. He chooses to oppose a "sea of troubles". The famous monologue is about this choice:

*To be, or not to be – that is the question.
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them – To die – to sleep–
No more....*

George Bernard Shaw said once, jokingly, that intelligent people adjust to the world while fools try to adjust the world to themselves; therefore, it is the fools who change the world and create history. In fact, this is a paradoxical way of formulating Hegel's idea of the tragic flaw. A sensible man is guided by common sense and the accepted prejudices of his time. The tragic hero is motivated by the need to fulfil himself no matter what. He is an independent individual who is free to choose the course and object of his actions. And it is his character and his actions that lead him to his ruin. The tragic climax is predetermined by the personality of the hero. External circumstances can only come into conflict with his character traits and lay them bare, but the reason for his actions lies within him. Consequently, he is the cause of his own death. According to Hegel, everything is the result of the hero's tragic flaw.

Chernyshevsky commented, and with good reason, that it is unnatural and rather cruel to regard the dead as the guilty party, and that the blame for the hero's death rests with unfavourable social circumstances which should be altered. However, Hegel's idea has a sound side to it: the tragic hero is an active party, he opposes the circumstances and acts in an attempt to resolve the most complicated problems of existence.

Hegel said that tragedy has a capacity for analysing the condition of the world. In *Hamlet*, for example, we read: "the time is out of joint"; "Denmark's a prison." – "Then is the world one". – "A goodly one, in which, there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one of the worst". There is deep meaning in the idea of the deluge. There are times when history overflows its banks and takes a long time to resume its normal course and

flow, now unhurriedly, now rapidly, into the future. Happy is the poet who, living in a tempestuous age, manages to reveal the essence of his time in his writing: he touches history itself, his work necessarily reflects at least some of the major aspects of mankind's historical progress. In such epochs, art becomes the mirror of history. Modern tragedy has continued the Shakespearean tradition of going right to the heart of contemporary events and tackling global problems.

In the Ancient Greek tragedy, the inevitable was realised through the hero's free action. The Middle Ages supplanted the inevitable by the arbitrary rule of Providence. The Renaissance rebelled against both, the inevitable and the arbitrary, asserting emancipation of the individual, and that was bound to lead to the latter's arbitrariness. The Renaissance failed to develop the potential of society through the individual and not despite the individual, and the potential of the individual – for the benefit of society and not to its detriment. But the icy wind of bourgeois individualism nipped the great hopes of Renaissance humanists for a harmoniously developed man. The geniuses like Rabelais, Cervantes and Shakespeare had a premonition of this tragedy.

The Renaissance produced the tragedy of the unrestricted individual. The only law guiding the actions of a Renaissance man was the first and last commandment of the Abbey of Thelema: do what thou wilt

(Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*). But, having shaken off the fetters of mediaeval religious ethics, the personality frequently lost morals, conscience and honour. The advancing age of individualism exhibited a readiness to supplant the Rabelaisian proposition by the one put forward by Hobbes, the war of all against all. Hamlet and Othello are free and unrestricted in their actions, but Jago and Claudius – the powers of evil – are equally free.

The humanists hoped that, having done away with the rigorous laws of Middle Ages, man would not put his newly acquired freedom to evil use, but their hopes were in vain. The Utopia of the strong individual turned into the total regimentation of this individual. In 17th-century France, this was manifested in politics (the absolutist state), in science and philosophy (Descartes' *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*), and in art (classicism). The tragedy of the Utopian absolute freedom was replaced by the tragedy of the personality which is shaped by absolute norms. The universal principle of man's duty to the state puts a restraint on his behaviour; the restrictions clash with man's free will, passions, desires and strivings. That is the central conflict in the tragedies of Corneille and Racine.

In romantic art (Heinrich Heine, Friedrich Schiller, Lord Byron, Frederick Chopin) the world is perceived through the mood of the individual.

Disappointment in the outcome of the bourgeois revolution and doubts as to the possibility of social progress produced *Weltschmerz*. Romanticism accepted the fact that life may have a diabolical, not divine origin and be the bearer of evil. Byron's dramas (e.g. *Cain*) claimed that evil and the struggle against it are inevitable and eternal. The embodiment of this universal evil was Lucifer. Cain could not accept any restriction imposed on the freedom and power of human spirit; the meaning of his life is rebellion, active opposition to eternal evil, a desire to change his position in the world by force. Evil is all-powerful, and even the hero's death cannot put an end to it. But this rebellion is not useless for romantic consciousness: at least it can prevent evil from establishing complete domination over the world; it is an oasis of life in the desert where evil reigns supreme.

Critical realism has revealed the tragic conflict between the individual and society. One of the greatest 19th-century tragedies is Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*. Boris intends to use his power for the good of the people, but to take it, he has to kill an innocent child, Prince Dimitry. A wall of estrangement and later hatred rises between Boris and the people. Pushkin shows that one cannot fight for the people without the people. Active and forceful, Boris in many ways resembles Shakespeare's characters. But there is also a difference. Shakespeare puts the individual in the centre of things, while for Pushkin the destiny of the individual is part of the destiny of the people and for the first time his actions are related to the good of the people. This approach was produced by the new epoch. The people as a whole were made the protagonist of the tragedy and the supreme judge of the hero's actions.

The same is true of Moussorgsky's music. His operas *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina* gave a perfect musical expression to Pushkin's idea that the destiny of the individual was indivisible from the destiny of his people. For the first time in the history of opera, the people were portrayed as a single whole united by their struggle against slavery, violence and despotism. An in-depth portrait of the people sets off the tragedy of conscience of Tsar Boris. Despite the best intentions, he remains alienated from the people and is secretly afraid of them, for he realises that he is blamed for their suffering and misfortunes. Moussorgsky succeeded in finding specifically musical means for conveying the tragic quality of life: dramatic contrasts, clear leitmotives, mournful intonations, somber tonality and dark timbre of the orchestration (e.g. bassoons in the lower register in Boris's

monologue "My soul mourns...").

The theme of tragic love was developed by Tchaikovsky in his symphonies *Francesca da Rimini* and *Romeo and Juliet*. The philosophical aspect was brilliantly developed by Beethoven in the theme of doom in his Symphony No. 5. It was taken up by Tchaikovsky in Symphonies Nos. 4, 6 and especially 5. In *Francesca da Rimini*, the doom ruins happiness; the music expresses growing despair. The motive of despair is present also in Symphony No. 4, but there the hero finds support in the eternal life of his people. Symphony No. 6 shows the awakening of the hero's moral and spiritual power. Intently tragic, it expresses the piercing sadness of dying. These symphonies describe, in musical language, the conflict between human desires and the obstacles they encounter, between life and death.

Critical realism of the 19th century (Dickens, Balzac, Stendhal, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Gogol et al.) has made an essentially non-tragic character the protagonist of the tragedy. In life, tragedy became a common occurrence, and its hero-an alienated, private and fractional (according to Hegel) individual. As a result, tragedy as a genre disappeared from art, but as an element, it has penetrated all artistic kinds and genres, expressing the desperate conflict between man and society.

The tragic can cease to be an attribute of the life of society only when society is humanised and brought into harmony with the individual. The desire of man to overcome the discord in life and recover the lost meaning of life-this is the concept of the tragic and the idea behind this theme as developed by critical realism of the 20th century (Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Leonhard Frank, Heinrich Boll, Federico Fellini, Michelangelo Antonioni, George Gershwin, et al.).

Tragic art reveals the social meaning of man's life showing that his immortality is realised through the immortality of his people. A major theme of tragedy is man and history. Making an abstract of Friedrich Theodor Fischer's *Aesthetik oder Wissenschaft der Schönen*, Karl Marx noted that the true theme of tragedy is revolution. A revolutionary conflict must become the centre Of modern tragedy. Tragic heroes are motivated not by personal whims but by the historical process which raises them on its crest. Soviet tragedies *The Doom of the Squadron* by Alexander Korneichuk, *The Rout* by Alexander Fadeyev and *An Optimistic Tragedy* by Vsevolod Vishnevsky, as well as the painting *Death of the Commissar* by Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin showed the revolution not as a background but as the essence of the epoch; the tragic there is the utmost expression of the heroic. The hero is not merely active, he

is a fighter. By his struggle and death he helps make the world a better place. His personal responsibility for his free actions, which is behind Hegel's concept of the tragic flaw, is treated by, for instance, Mikhail Sholokhov, as *historical responsibility*.

The theme of responsibility of the individual before history found a profound interpretation in Mikhail Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don*. The gigantic scope of events and acceleration of social progress involve every man into this process making him its conscious or involuntary participant. The hero is therefore responsible for choosing his way in life, solving his problems and understanding the meaning of life. Accidents are inevitable, but it is not an accident that tests the tragic hero but history and its laws. Sholokhov's hero is controversial and changeable; sometimes insignificant, at times he is ennobled by suffering and terrible ordeal. But at the same time he is a strong person, and that is why his fate is a tragic one: a fragile birch bends and survives a storm, while an oak which refuses to give in to the elements is uprooted.

In music, the new type of tragic symphony was developed by Dmitry Shostakovich. While in Tchaikovsky's symphonies the doom comes upon the hero from the outside in the form of a powerful, inhuman and hostile force, in Shostakovich's work this sort of conflict occurs only once, when the composer describes the advent of evil which disrupts the normal flow of human life (the theme of intrusion in the first part of Symphony No. 7). In Symphony No. 5, whose theme is the development of personality, the evil is shown as the other side of humaneness. The finale resolves the tragic intensity of the first parts. In Symphony No. 14, Shostakovich is concerned with the eternal problems of love, life and death. Both the music and the verse are deeply philosophical and tragic. Shown against the image of death, life emerges in all its beauty.

The Essence of the Tragic

Tragedy is a stern word filled with hopelessness. It leaves a shadow of death, its icy breath is immediately perceptible. But similar to the dawn whose light and shadow make objects more expressive, the idea of death makes man acutely conscious of life's beauty, poignancy, joy and complexity. When death is near, the hues of life are all the more bright, its aesthetic wealth, sensuous charm and grandeur of the ordinariness are all the greater, and truth, falsehood, good, evil and the very meaning of human existence are all the more striking.

Tragedy is always *optimistic*: in it, even death serves life. *The tragic*,

then, shows (1) death or acute suffering of the individual; (2) the inability for the people to replace the loss; (3) the immortal socially valuable features of the Individual and their continuation in the life of mankind; (4) global metaphysical problems of existence and the social meaning of human life; (5) the ability of the tragic hero to act freely in the circumstances; (6) the philosophically interpreted condition of the world; (7) the contradictions which cannot be resolved at a given stage of historical development; (8) expressed in the form of art, the tragic purifies people.

Great art has always welcomed progress, and in its progress it hurried life. Its desire is to attain the ideal as soon as possible. What Hegel called the tragic flaw is in fact an amazing ability not to conform to the imperfect world but to proceed from the ideal of life as it should be. The conflict with the world is fraught with deadly consequences for the individual: the clouds gather, and in the end death strikes like lightning. But it is the individual to conform, who refuses to conform, who makes the world a better place and opens new vistas for humanity by his suffering and death.

The kernel problem of tragic art is expanding the scope of man's action, a break through the historically established boundaries which have become too narrow for the more advanced individuals fired by a desire to attain new ideals. The tragic hero blazes the trail towards the future overstepping the existing limitations; he is always ahead of his time and is therefore destined to carry the heaviest load.

Tragedy presents a concept of life which reveals its social meaning. The essence and purpose of human existence is not to be found either in total egoism or total altruism. The individual should develop not at the expense of society but for the good of society and humanity as a whole. On the other hand, society should progress fighting for man's interests and not despite man and at his expense. This is the highest aesthetic ideal, the way to find a humane solution of the problems of man and mankind, and the most general conclusion attained by world tragic art.

¹ Recent research has shown that non-agricultural peoples were also aware of the rotation of life and death in nature since they witnessed the change the seasons: autumn and winter – the death of nature; spring and summer – its resurrection.

AESTHETICS: THE AXIOLOGY OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES

Aesthetics: The Branch of Knowledge Dealing with the Aesthetic Diversity of Life and Art

THE COMIC

The Comic as a Side of Social and Cultural Life

In one of his works, Jean Paul, the German writer and aesthetician, used an episode from *Don Quixote* to analyse the nature of the comic. When Sancho Panza spent the night suspended above a shallow ditch thinking that it was an abyss, it would seem that his behaviour was quite natural and that he would have been a fool to make a jump and get killed. Why then are we laughing? According to Jean Paul, the comic here arises out of *substitution*. We lend *his* (Sancho Panza's) reasoning *our* understanding of the situation and the view of things, and are amused by the resulting incongruity.

The comic is always within the subject of laughter, not the object. But the comic does not appear because we supply another person's behaviour with our understanding of the circumstances which contradicts it. *It lies in the object itself* without being its innate quality. The episode under discussion has a comic content, Sancho Panza himself is comic, since for all his common sense he proved a bit of a coward and failed to assess the circumstances correctly. In this situation he does not live up to the ideal and therefore becomes an object of laughter.

Human society is truly a realm of comedy, as well as tragedy. Man is the only being who can both laugh and be the cause of laughter, or, to be more precise, every object of amusement contains a human and social element. Sometimes the source of fun is looked for, quite erroneously, in natural phenomena: a curious shape of a cloud, cliff or mineral (particularly stalactites), odd appearance or behaviour of a monkey, a bear or a fox, or the unusual form of a cactus. Quoting a scene from *Hamlet*, the German philosopher Adolf Zeising says that Shakespeare laughs at the funny metamorphosis of clouds. But is that so?

H a m l e t: Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

P o l o n i u s: By th'mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

H a m l e t: Methinks it is like a weasel.

P o l o n i u s: It is backed like a weasel.

H a m l e t: Or like a whale?

P o l o n i u s: Very like a whale.

Obviously Shakespeare is making fun not of clouds but of the unscrupulous and obsequious Polonius.

Animals in fables are sometimes given as a seemingly more convincing example of the comic in nature. But even 19th-century aesthetics pointed out that animals in fables personify human character traits.

The comic always constitutes an aspect of the *objective social value* of a phenomenon. The funny grimaces of monkeys or the behaviour of a small puppy are not naturally comic. They are funny only when social content – human character and relations – are perceptible through their natural form. Natural features of animals and their behaviour (the quick movements and mannerisms of a monkey, the developed instincts of a fox allowing it to "outwit" its enemies, the clumsiness of a bear) are associated with human habits, behaviour and manners and become an object of aesthetic assessment on the basis of social practice. Through natural phenomena, human faults and shortcomings like fussiness, slyness, clumsiness, sluggishness of movement and thought are ridiculed.

Laughter can be produced by a great variety of things from tickling to alcohol. Cases have been recorded in Africa of an infectious epidemic disease manifested in prolonged exhausting laughter. The Covetous Knight smiled at the sight of his treasures.

However, not all that is funny is comic, although the comic is always funny. One may say that the comic is the fair sister of the funny causing "socially loaded" laughter which is ennobled by the presence of an aesthetic ideal, the laughter which rejects certain human character traits and social phenomena and extolls others. Depending on the circumstances, the same phenomenon can be either comic or just funny. When a person's trousers fall suddenly down, others may burst into laughter. But there is nothing comic in this situation. But take the Hungarian film *The Revenge of Shoddy Work*. The principal character, a tailor who decides to wear a pair of trousers he has made himself, loses them in public. As he has only his own work to blame for it, the situation becomes comic. The comic is social both by virtue of its *objective* (features of the object or phenomenon) and *subjective* (perception) aspects.

Expression and Perception of the Comic

Laughter is infectious and is predominantly a "group activity". The comic is best conveyed by the arts which are intended for *large* audiences – theatre, cinema, circus. Television also presupposes a great number of spectators, but watching it is usually done individually or in a small group. For this reason, the actors who are aware of the principle of perception of the comic usually address a comic text not to TV but to live audiences with which they can establish a feedback. Comedians usually have television broadcast their performances live so that communication with the audience and the reaction of the latter comes over on the sound-track. The comic can find expression in music, an art which appeals directly to man's inner being. Perception of the comic in instrumental music requires a certain mood conditioned, for instance, by the composer's indication as to the genre of his piece. A good way to achieve a comic effect in music is to transform genres. In his *London Symphonies*, Joseph Haydn disrupts the logic of dance and genre music by sudden pauses and contrasts, which produces a comic effect.

The comic finds a particularly vivid expression in comic opera, which was brought to life by democratic tendencies in society and art. It emerged in Italy in the 1730s under the name of *opera buffa* reaching its peak in the work of Pergolese. *Opera buffa* introduced a democratic element into music and theatre. Comedy played a prominent part in it, the music was "popular" in style and had a great deal in common with song, including folklore elements. In France, comic opera grew out of shows staged during fairs to satisfy the cultural requirements of the third estate, which also testifies to its democratic character.

Opera buffa exercised considerable influence over Viennese classics and through them, European music. It evolved many features of musical comedy: its homophonic texture, phrasing, mobility, recitative, clear harmonic logic, strict division of motives, connection with folk music. These features have formed the basis of the comic musical language of classical opera. In Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, Farlaf's aria includes comic-opera recitative, as does Varlaam's aria in Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*.

The only art incapable of conveying the comic is architecture. A comic building would be a disaster for both spectators, inhabitants and visitors. In architecture, the ideals of a given society are reflected directly, it cannot come out with straightforward criticism or reject and, consequently, ridicule. The comic in art always has a highly developed critical element. *It is an emotionally*

loaded aesthetic form of criticism. It gives the artist (for instance, Rabelais or Voltaire) a practically unlimited opportunity to deal, both humorously and seriously, with the prejudices of his time.

Comedy is the fruit of advanced civilisation. Laughter is democratic by nature. It pays no heed to hierarchical division and rejects servility and respect for puffed-up authority. It is a force opposed to all forms of inequality, oppression, despotism and dictatorship. Hans Christian Andersen used this feature and social function of laughter in his fairy tale *The Naked King*. A king remains a king only for as long as the people treat him as such. But as soon as they dared to believe their own eyes and admit that the king was naked – servility and admiration came to an end: the people began to laugh. The comic in the enemy is his heel of Achilles. To reveal the comic side means to ensure the first major victory, muster one's strength for the fight and overcome fear and confusion.

The comic is the spirit of up-to-date criticism. Its target is concrete and definite. Even if the satirist deals with the time long past, his weapon is turned against the vices of his day.

In his short story *Alexander of Macedon*, Karel Capek strikes out against despotism. It is written in the form of a letter from Alexander to his tutor Aristotle. Capek has created a portrait of an usurper who demands admiration and homage, and described a campaign of idolisation combining hypocrisy with threats and direct violence. Alexander's old Macedonian guard resented the opulence of his court. "For that reason I was unfortunately obliged to execute my old comrades-in-arms. I was very sorry for them, but there was no other way," writes the newly enthroned emperor.

Alexander is quite resigned to sustaining more losses. "Circumstances demand from me fresh personal sacrifices, and though I personally do not wish to, I am thinking only of the grandeur and might of my glorious empire. I am forced to get used to the barbaric splendour and opulence of Oriental ways." The reader can of course sympathise with "poor Alexander" realising that it must be "morally unbearable" for him to live in luxury. "I've taken as my wives," Alexander continues, "three Oriental princesses, and now, my dear Aristotle, I have even proclaimed myself a god! "

In the spirit of true altruism, he accepts this new privation which historical necessity demands from him. "Yes, my dear tutor, a god! My loyal... subjects worship me and make sacrifices in my honour. This is necessary from the political point of view to give me adequate authority with these mountain-dwellers, cattle-breeders and camel-drivers. The time is long gone when you

taught me to be guided by reason and logic! But there is nothing to be done, reason itself tells me that one should adjust to the unreasonableness of man." Despotism is always a crescendo of insanity: "I see that I have never done anything that has not been determined by a previous step." But even the greatest military leader cannot survive by sword alone. "So now I am asking you, my wise friend and tutor, to give a philosophical substantiation of and convincing reasons for my proclaiming myself a god. In this, I am acting, I feel as a responsible politician and statesman."

Alexander concludes his letter by hinting that steps will be taken should Aristotle's position prove not patriotic enough. "These are my orders. It is up to you to make sure that, following them, you are fully conscious of their political significance, expediency and patriotic meaning."

Alexander proclaimed himself a god using force, hypocrisy and philosophy. But even if a "mundane god" attains autocracy, this does not mean that humanity has to forego its right to produce something in the nature of Alexander's correspondence with his tutor. And all of a sudden, the godly personality turns out to be a comic one. And that which society ridicules is destined to be rectified or annihilated.

Laughter is an easy to understand, infectious and pointed form of emotional criticism. But it requires a *conscious and active attitude* on the part of the audience. In the comic, criticism and exposure are not direct and the public is led to seeing them through the eyes of the author. In his *Vorlesungen über das Wesen der Religion*, Ludwig Feuerbach noted that a witty manner of writing implies wit in the reader, it does not tell all but leaves it to the reader to explain to himself the relations, conditions and restrictions which alone make a given situation meaningful and conceivable.

Doubts as to the intelligence of the audience produce flat and sometimes even trite humour. As distinct from tragedy or a heroic poem, comedy does not define the ideal directly and positively but implies it as something opposite to that which is depicted. The recipient has to independently contrast in his mind high aesthetic ideals with the comic phenomenon.

The Comic as a Contradiction

The essence of the comic is a *contradiction*. It is the result of contrast, discrepancy, opposition: the ugly – the beautiful (Aristotle); the negligible – the sublime (Kant); the ridiculous – the sensible (Jean Paul, Schopenhauer); infinite predestination – infinite arbitrariness (Schelling); the mechanical – the

live (Bergson); the sham, falsely meaningful – the significant, stable and true (Hegel); the empty interior – the exterior laying claim to importance (Chernyshevsky); inferior – superior (Hartmann), etc. Each of these definitions evolved in the history of aesthetics singles out and regards as an absolute *one of the types of comic contradiction*. But its forms are many and varied, and therefore a definition which emphasises only one of them cannot be considered adequate.

The comic contradiction always includes *two opposite elements*, one of which, seemingly positive and attracting attention, in fact proves a negative entity. The psychological mechanism of laughter produced by the comic is, strange as it may seem, akin to the mechanism of fright or astonishment. What brings together these very different manifestations of man's inner activity? They are all emotions which have not been prepared by the events preceding them. The person is all ready to come face to face with something significant, but what he actually perceives is utterly meaningless; he expects to see something beautiful, and truly humane, but it is ugliness, a manequin, a live doll that is suddenly put in front of him. Kant saw the essence of the comic in suspense being suddenly resolved into nothing. Montesquieu, the French philosopher of the Enlightenment (18th century), wrote, "When ugliness is totally unexpected, it may cause a sort of merriment and even laughter."

A characteristic feature of each of the many objective contradictions which give rise to the comic is that the side which is perceived first chronologically seems significant and produces a strong impression, while the other side, which is perceived later, is disappointingly flimsy.

Laughter is always a joyous fright, disappointment and astonishment, which are directly opposite to delight and admiration. "It turns out that, reading Gogol's *Inspector-General*, I was mistaken in thinking that the Governor correctly takes Khlestakov for the Inspector-General and believing that a man who is taken for an Inspector-General must be, if not respectable and imposing, at least a person one ought to be afraid of. But the person I see is a non-entity.... There exists an enormous blatant discrepancy between the real Khlestakov and the person he is taken for; between the idea of a government official as he ought to be and as he really is. I am pleased to have grasped this discrepancy perceiving the inner meaning behind the exterior, the general behind the particular, the very idea of the phenomenon. It is good to know that everything dangerous to society, its vices and faults is not only formidable but also comic and negligible. The world of non-entities and dead souls is a horrible one, but is comic as well: it is below the level of perfection,

it does not live up to the ideals of the author and the reader. I realise this, therefore I have risen above the danger, and it is nothing to me. It may kill me, it may make me suffer, but my ideals are higher and therefore mightier; I, and my ideals, cannot be defeated, and for that reason I can laugh at the dead souls, the governors and the life which has produced them," thus reasons the reader.

Gogol did not see how the contradictions he treated in his works could be overcome, and his laughter tended to be rather sad. But he had an enormous moral and aesthetic superiority over the world he depicted. And for that reason, he and his readers can afford to laugh. What would happen if a witticism lacked suddenness and spontaneity? Everything would have become ordinary and regulated. There would have been no unexpected and striking opposition between the fact and the high aesthetic ideal. Our thinking would have had none of the energy which appears when we are grasping this opposition. There would have been no flash which brings out the comic in the phenomenon.

The importance of suddenness in the comic is illustrated by the myth about Parmeniscus. A fright deprived him of the ability to laugh which made him suffer excruciatingly. He appealed to the Delphic oracle for help, and the latter recommended Parmeniscus to go look for a statue of Leto, Apollo's mother. Parmeniscus expected to see the statue of a beautiful woman, but instead, he was shown a block of wood. And he burst into laughter.

This myth has profound theoretical-aesthetic meaning. Parmeniscus's laughter was caused by the discrepancy between what he expected to see and what he actually saw. His surprise has an element of *criticism* in it. Had Parmeniscus seen a woman whose beauty surpassed his expectations, he would not have started to laugh. The shock allowed his consciousness to draw a contrast between the lofty aesthetic ideal – his idea of Leto's beauty – and the phenomenon which, claiming to live up to the ideal, failed miserably to do so. In music, the comic as a contradiction is manifested through artistically organised alogisms and incongruities which also contain an element of unexpected. Bringing together incompatible melodic lines is a means of producing a comic effect. This is the principle underlying the aria of Dodon in Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *The Golden Cockerel* in which the blend of the primitive and the refined produces grotesque. In his opera *The Nose* based on the story by Gogol, Dmitry Shostakovich also used grotesque counterpoint: the first melodic line imitates Bach's pathos and his use of recitative, while the second is a galop rendered with exaggerated primitivism.

In the musical genres involving stage action or accompanied by a literary programme the comic is perceived visually. But instrumental music does not have to resort to "visual aids" to convey it. Robert Schumann said that, having first performed Beethoven's Rondo a capriccio in major for piano, he began to laugh, for it produced an impression of something very funny. Imagine his astonishment when he later found out from Beethoven's papers that the composer named his piece *Rage over a Lost Groschen, Which Assumed the Form of a Rondo*. Concerning the finale of Beethoven's Symphony No. 2, Schumann wrote that it was the greatest example of humour in instrumental music, while in Schubert's Moments Musical he could perceive unpaid tailor's bills, so full were they of annoyance which had nothing spiritual about it. Suddenness is another means of attaining a comic effect in music. A kettledrum shakes the listeners out of a dreamy dissipation in one of Haydn's *London Symphonies*; a pistol shot disrupts the flow of melody in Strauss's *Waltz with a Surprise*. Both invariably cause merriment in the audience. In Moussorgsky's *Seminarist*, mundane thoughts conveyed by the smooth flow of melody are suddenly broken by a recitative showing the same seminarist grinding away at a Latin text.

The aesthetic basis of all these comic musical works is the effect produced by the unexpected.

The Russian fairy tale has its own *Parmeniscus* – the Princess Who Never Laughed. Bewitched by a malicious sorcerer, she lost the gift of laughter and all attempts to make her laugh were in vain. Victor Vasnetsov used this fairy tale for one of his paintings. The Princess is shown sitting on a high throne. She is immersed in herself and pays no heed to anything around her. She looks as if she has lost something very valuable but cannot remember just what it is. Surrounding the throne are jesters, courtiers, buffoons, dancers, psaltery players and narrators of folk tales. A merry crowd can also be seen through the window. But no one can make the Princess laugh. Waves of laughter break against her throne. The person who has put himself above the people may become an object of fun, but not its subject. The kingdom is full of laughter, but this is not enough to make the Princess smile. The presence of the comic in life must be supplemented by the ability to appreciate it, i.e., *a sense of humour*.

The people do not see laughter as a harmless pastime. To lose the ability to laugh means to lose a whole important segment of one's inner life. And there is probably nothing worse than to be the ruler of a comic fairy-tale kingdom who is unable to laugh.

A sense of humour as an aspect of the faculty of the aesthetic has its specific features, one of which is the presence of a high aesthetic ideal. Otherwise humour turns into scepticism, cynicism, triteness, obscenity, bawdiness. Humour implies the ability to grasp the incongruities of life, even if this is done on a purely emotional level and in the most general aesthetic form. A sense of humour is a feature of the aesthetically developed mind which can instantly give an emotional assessment of the gist of the phenomenon and generate rich, varied and unexpected associations and parallels.

A creative, active variety of the sense of humour is *wit*. Humour is the ability to perceive the comic, while wit is the ability to produce it. It is a talent to concentrate, crystallise and aesthetically assess the incongruities of life making the comic inherent in them obvious.

Since unexpectedness is a must in the comic, a humourous work of art has to be unique. But, as Hegel noted, this should not be attained by making it fanciful and strange. Goya, the genius of satirical grotesque, stressed the necessity to blend phantasy and reason in the comic. In the margins of one of his etchings he wrote, "The sleep of reason breeds monsters." Divorced from reason, phantasy produces horrors; blended with it, it works miracles becoming the source of art.

The Constructive and the Destructive Aspects of the Comic

Laughter caused by the comic has a critical, explosive effect. But it is not criticism for the sake of criticism, a Mephistophelean total rejection, blind destruction. True wit is humane. The basis of wit is not the philosophy of all-embracing nihilism but high aesthetic ideals advanced by criticism. Therefore laughter is *criticism which both rejects and asserts*.

Laughter seeks to do away with the world full of injustice and replace it with a better one. It implies both destruction and creative construction. The optimistic, creative, joyous, merry side of the comic has a historic, ideological and aesthetic significance. The creative power of laughter was noticed long ago. Ancient art had fun worships, ritual laughter, mocking images of deities. Ritual laughter of primeval communities condemned and destroyed the imperfect world and resurrected it on a new foundation. An Egyptian papyrus now kept in Leiden says that the laughter of god created the world: "When God laughed, the seven gods ruling the world were born... He burst into laughter again, and waters appeared..."

Ancient Greeks also regarded laughter as a creative force. Its optimistic,

joyous, merry, popular nature is rooted in comedy which grew out of the worship of Dionysus.

What were the features of the comic originally? During the festivities in honour of Dionysus, conventional ideas of propriety were temporarily put aside. The atmosphere was that of relaxation and complete freedom from accepted norms. It was an ephemeral world of boundless merriment, ridicule and unrestrained in word and action. Man glorified the creative power of nature and the carnal which found expression in the comic. Laughter served the chief purpose of the ritual: to show the triumph of life's productive power; laughter and ribaldry were regarded as possessing creative force.

During the Roman Saturnalia, the forces of life also burst through the canons of official ideology. At least for a while, the people were back in the legendary Golden Age, the kingdom of impetuous gaiety. In Rome, laughter which asserted the joy of living and was thus in contrast to the official ideology, could be heard during rituals which both glorified and ridiculed the victor, and lamented, exalted and made fun of the dead.

In the Middle Ages, laughter opposing the rigid ideas spread by the official church sounded during carnivals, at comical pageants and processions, festivals of fools and asses, in parodies, in the frivolous language of the street, in the witticisms and pranks of jesters, in everyday life, and during feasts.

The carnival, this festive non-official form of the life of mediaeval society, represented comic folk culture with its optimistic idea of eternal renovation, the idea which is one of the major principles of the aesthetics of the comic.

Laughter does not only show the imperfection of the world but, having washed it with the fresh wave of joy, transforms and renovates it. In the mediaeval carnival, the quality of merry-making and laughter as a destructive and at the same time constructive power was revealed with particular force assuming a complete and original form. Mediaeval Europeans devoted up to a quarter of their lives to the carnival.

The chief figure, the hero of the carnival was the jester, a comical actor-improviser for whom all the world was a stage, and life – a comedy. He never abandoned his part, for it fully coincided with his personality. He lived his role, his life was art personified. The jester was like an amphibian who naturally belonged both to the realm of the real and the ideal (art).

Leaving the town streets and the squares, the spirit of the carnival found its way into literature, especially *parody*. All principal ideas and subjects of the official religious doctrine, as well as all major literary works of that period have been parodied (*The Liturgy of the Drunks*, versions of *Chanson de Roland*,

etc.).

Man is the measure of all things. His carnal nature accepted without bigotry, his natural state and needs-that is the measure of all values. Nature full of physical and mental power, bursting with intelligence and sensuality was liberated through the merry, mischievous, frivolous, bawdy, impudent and optimistic *carnival laughter*. It was the laughter of *the people, of the festival*. It was *all-embracing*, i.e. directed at everyone and everything, including the merry-makers themselves: all the world represented in its comic aspect, its gay relativity. Carnival laughter was both gay, joyous and derisive, it rejected and accepted, condemned and resurrected, buried and brought back from the dead. The people saw themselves as part of the emerging world. In that, carnival fun differed from satire. The role of a satirist is rejection, he places himself outside the phenomenon which is being ridiculed and opposes himself to it. This disrupts the unity and wholeness of the world's comic aspect; the funny (the negative) becomes only a particular instance. Any variety of laughter produced by the comic is a collective phenomenon; the universal and popular nature of carnival laughter is only the highest and most complete manifestation of the general principle underlying the aesthetics of the comic. In different forms of the comic, rejection and acceptance are mixed in different proportions. Even in biting satire negation rests on a positive, life-asserting programme. Carnival laughter blends rejection and acceptance, humour and satire, which gradually emerged as independent forms of the comic.

Types and Shades of the Comic

Humour and satire are the two basic forms of the comic which produce different kinds of laughter. *Humour* is friendly and contains no malice, although it cannot be called inoffensive. It goes to the heart of things seeking to improve them and do away with their shortcomings, and helps reveal everything which is socially valuable in them. The object of humour has aspects which live up to the ideal. As the saying goes, our demerits grow out of our merits, and it is these demerits which give food for good-natured humour. The object of humour is not above criticism but is on the whole quite attractive. But it is a different matter when the phenomenon as a whole is negative, socially dangerous. In that case humour is not strong enough. Everything rotten is the object of *satire*, which condemns the imperfection of the world in order to transform it according to an ideal programme.

A whole range of *shades of laughter* can be observed between humour and satire: Aesop's raillery; Rabelais's uproarious laughter; Swift's bitter sarcasm; Erasmus's subtle irony; Moliere's satire, sometimes refined as was the fashion of classicism, sometimes rational and stern, sometimes mischievous; Voltaire's wise and malicious smile; Beaumarchais's sparkling wit; Beranger's banter and irony; Daumier's cartoons; Goya's wrathful grotesque; Heine's romantic and France's sceptical irony; Mark Twain's jolly and Shaw's ironic humour; Gogol's smile through a veil of tears; Saltykov-Shchedrin's biting satire and sarcasm; Chekhov's soulful, sad and lyrical humour; Hasek's mirthful and Brecht's optimistic satire; Sholokhov's inexhaustible life-asserting humour akin to that found in folk art...

All these hues of laughter can be conveyed by music. Perceptible in Moussorgsky's *Seminarist*, *Kalistrat*, *The Flea* and in his opera *The Marriage* are humour, irony and even sarcasm. Rodion Shchedrin's ballet *The Dead Souls* is marked by the same bitter laughter as Gogol's novel of the same name it is based on. Each of the characters in the ballet has its own theme and rhythm, and is portrayed through the "voice" of a certain musical instrument: flute (Manilov), bassoon (Korobochka), French horn (Nozdryov), two double-basses (Sobakevich).

The many shades of the comic (*carnival laughter, humour, satire, irony, sarcasm, joke, banter, pun*) have been engendered by the aesthetic wealth of life itself. The forms and measure of the laughter are determined by the features of the object, the artist's ideological and aesthetic position, his attitude towards the object, national features, and the trend of development of the nation's aesthetic culture as a whole.

The comic always bears a stamp of the nation which has produced it and has a nationally unique form. The national characteristics of the comic undergo change in the course of history.

Let us take France as an example. Many of those who have made the comic an object of study including Sigmund Freud, Ernst Kuno Fischer and Theodor Lipps have regarded the *pun* as one of the lowest forms of the joke. But in the 17th- and 18th-century France, the pun was the highest manifestation of wit. It was light, brilliant and carelessly gay thus corresponding aesthetically to the way of life of French high society which set the standard in the nation's cultural life. Wit was a highly valued gift which could serve as a sort of reference. There is a story about Louis XV who, wishing to test one of his courtiers, told him that he desired to be the subject of a pun, to which the cavalier replied, "*Le roi n'est pas sujet*" (The king is not a subject), a typical

example of French gallant wit. In the late 18th century, the French Revolution swept away both the court and the gallant aristocratic humour. The comic became dominated by *grotesque*, whose edge cut the nobility with bitterness and malice. The values and ideals of the monarchist state were toppled and ridiculed as incompatible with the ideals of universal freedom, equality and fraternity. However, by the mid-19th century it was already obvious that these ideals had failed to become reality, although the values of the aristocratic past were irrevocably lost. Lack of faith in any definite ideal gave rise to a peculiar sort of wit which came to be known as *blague*, the merciless ridiculing of things which the people used to worship, a product of social disappointment. Shattered illusions became the norm; in the realm of humour this was manifested in mirthless and somewhat cynical fun which held nothing sacred. Here is an example of *blague*: "This woman is like the Republic – she was beautiful during the Empire."

The 20th century produced its own form of humour – gag. Coloured by horror which in the end proves groundless, it reflects the alienation of people living in the epoch of industrial civilisation. Here is an American advertisement founded on gag. Two engine-drivers at odds with each other are driving their crowded trains towards an inevitable collision. A child with a ball in his hands runs out onto the rails. The trains collide, but... the catastrophe is averted by the ball; the trains bounce back from it. The advertisement ends with the words: "Buy balls produced by..." The famous scene of Charlie Chaplin's experience between the cogwheels of a gigantic mechanism in the film *Modern Times* also follows the laws of gag. From America it came to France becoming a popular form of the comic there.

Pun, grotesque, *blague* and gag are all forms of French humour determined by the nation's way of life at different stages of its development. Naturally, the author does not imply that grotesque had not existed before the French Revolution or that the pun became extinct with the decline of French aristocracy. What is meant here is only the predominance of a certain form of the comic and wit aesthetics at a given stage of the country's history.

The national elements of a culture are not so much costume or cuisine as mental attitudes, which are most strikingly manifested in the nationally-tinted forms of the comic.

The comic bears the stamp of the national, but it also has *international and universal* features. Certain laws of social development are common to all mankind, and therefore different nations frequently choose the same phenomenon as the target of ridicule.

The Evolution of the Comic

The essential characteristics of the comic changed as age replaced age: life itself was changing, and with it, the point of departure in the study of life in its comic aspect.

In ancient comic literature, this point was the ego, *a personal impression*, the artist's attitude of friendliness or hostility. The highly developed Roman statehood was bound to produce the *normative quality* of thought and judgement, which is obvious from the rigid division between good and evil, the positive and the negative (a feature of the work of Juvenal, the Roman satirist). The point of departure at that time was the normative idea of a rationally organised universe.

Renaissance comedy proceeded from *human nature, the idea of man as the measure of the condition of the world*. *The Praise of Folly* by Erasmus of Rotterdam treats folly not only as an object but also as a subject of ridicule. "Normal" and "moderate" folly judges, condemns and makes fun of the folly which is boundless, unreasonable and inhuman.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra revealed the contradiction produced by the progress of civilisation. On the one hand, it is impossible to start afresh on the smouldering ashes of burnt books; an individual has to fall back on the experience accumulated by world culture. On the other hand, culture which is dogmatic and far removed from the life of the people, which fanatically clings to ideas that have long been unable to meet the requirements of the epoch, is of course equally unacceptable. This very real contradiction can turn each well-meant effort, every idea realised in this unintentionally dogmatic way into either comedy or tragedy.

The dreamer Don Quixote is bound by the moral obligations of chivalry. His whole being is aware that all is not well with the world – this causes him almost physical suffering. As a knight, he sees it as his sacred duty and his vocation to get involved, "to wander the earth reinstating the truth and avenging offences". But the incompatibility of his actions with actual circumstances breeds more falsehoods and fresh offences. Sancho Panza, on the other hand, has no militant ideas at all. He is a receptacle of folk beliefs and prejudices, wisdom and delusions. Global problems are not his domain; he himself and his immediate surroundings constitute his whole world.

Sancho Panza does not believe that the sensible natural flow of life should be tempered with, and leaves the people to live as they like, free and unhampered.

The characters of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are poles apart. But the numerous points of difference between them do not prevent them from having at least one thing in common – unselfishness. And that one trait makes us forgive all their follies, eccentricities and silly behaviour. They are not of this world – they are superior to it, gripped as it is with money-grubbing. The mad Don Quixote proves to be more normal than the "normal" people driven by avarice and ambition. Cervantes made a brilliant use of the ability of the comic *to analyse the condition of the world* depicting one of its aspects, to both work out an artistic concept of the world and create a broad panorama of life. In the age of classicism, satire proceeded from *abstract moral and aesthetic norms*; the object was a character who represented, in a condensed form, the abstract negative traits contrasting with goodness, such as hypocrisy, ignorance or misanthropy (Moliere). The tradition of Cervantes – the analysis of the condition of the world – was further developed in the satire of the Enlightenment, which was turned against the imperfection of the world and human nature. The new stage of social development manifested itself in the figure of Gulliver created by Jonathan Swift. Gulliver is a human mountain, a match for Renaissance giants. But it is typical that it is not Gulliver *in toto*, with his merits and weaknesses, who becomes the measure in the satirical analysis of the epoch, but only his *common sense*, which Swift uses as a point of departure when castigating evil, for the grandeur and might of man are relative. A giant in Lilliput, Gulliver is a midget in Brobdingnag.

Remaining within the boundaries of the Enlightenment, Swift nevertheless sensed that its ideas were Utopian. He said that the principal ideas advanced by that epoch were impracticable: "In the school of Political Projectors I was but ill-entertained, the professors appearing, in my judgement, wholly out of their senses... These unhappy people were proposing schemes for persuading monarchs to choose favourites upon the score of their wisdom, capacity, and virtue; of teaching Ministers to consult the public good; of rewarding merit, great abilities, and eminent services..."

The romantic movement showed that all was not well with the world through the unhappiness of man making his *inner world* the object of artistic analysis. Irony, this iceberg of the comic, became the dominant form. It proceeds, on the one hand, from the *unattainable idea of perfect world* which is used to assess the personality and, on the other, the equally unattainable idea of the perfect personality which is used to test the world. The initial position of criticism is constantly shifting from the world to the individual and back. Irony directed at the world is supplanted by irony directed at oneself (Heinrich Heine), and

then by *Weltskepsis*, whose role in romantic irony was similar to that of *Weltschmerz* in romantic tragedy.

The 19th century extended and complicated man's contacts with life. The personality became the focus of a multitude of social relations (economic, socio-political and moral). Its inner world gained in complexity. As a result, in critical realism, satire goes to the heart of the psychological process. The point of departure is the *developed aesthetic ideal* absorbing popular ideas of life, man and goals, and better forms of social progress. The popular ideas of life become accepted as the fundamental point of view of the world. The comic begins to correlate its object with the life of the people, and that is a major achievement of realism.

The critical trend in Russian 19th-century art has a clearly satirical bend. A single phrase is frequently sufficient for Gogol to include the comic character with all the particulars of his existence into the universe (relating it to the existence of the world as a whole). As Gogol put it, his satire placed a Russian face to face with Russia, and an individual – face to face with mankind.

Modernism (Franz Kafka, Salvador Dali) produced antisatire, which ridiculed the absurdity of the world from the point of view of an egocentric personality *wrapped up in itself*. This sort of satire does not study the carriers of social evil. Ridiculed are the results of its existence only, the evil being treated as an irrational element beyond the grasp of the mind.

In Soviet satire (Zoshchenko, Mayakovsky, Bulgakov) the comic is directed against everything *preventing an individual from fitting in into society*. In the finale of Mayakovsky's play *The Bathhouse*, the future sends its emissary, the Phosphorescent Woman, into our epoch; the future absorbs the best sides of life as it is today rejecting all that fails to live up to its standard of perfection (the time machine speeding towards the year 2030 spits out Pobedonosikov and other bureaucrats). The action of the play is future-oriented. In Mayakovsky's satire *the future* is the aesthetic ideal used by the poet to analyse contemporary life as a whole and its dark sides and assess the merits of the best and the faults of the worst of our contemporaries. The ideas of the time machine and the quickened and condensed time developed in the play are extremely up-to-date.

We have seen that the initial position of the emotional criticism of the comic changed with the passage of time: personal attitude (Aristophanes); the idea of a rationally organised universe (Juvenal); human nature as the measure (Cervantes, Erasmus, Rabelais); the norm (Moliere); common sense (Swift); unattainable perfection (Heine); the ideal representing popular ideas of life

(Gogol, Saltykov-Shchedrin); the future (Mayakovsky). The evolution of the ideal, with temporary digressions, is *towards expansion and perfection*. More aspects of life became included into the realm of art; the individual's inner life grew richer, and that served to render the ideal more democratic, helping it to absorb the popular ideas as to what is correct, good and beautiful.

The comic exists in a variety of types, forms and shades; it has national and historical characteristics, but its essence is always the same: it expresses *the socially perceptible and significant contradiction, the failure of the phenomenon as a whole or one of its aspects to correspond to the standards set by high aesthetic ideals*. The comic condemns the imperfections of life, purifies and renovates man, and asserts the joy of living.

AESTHETICS: THE AXIOLOGY OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES

Aesthetics: The Branch of Knowledge Dealing with the Aesthetic Diversity of Life and Art

THE DIVERSITY OF AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS

The Ugly

As compared to the beautiful, its opposites – the ugly, the base, and the horrible – have received less attention in theory, but they have not been entirely neglected. Pondering on the dialectics of the beautiful and the ugly, ancient Egyptians noted that through ageing everything healthy and beautiful becomes ill and ugly, "that which is sound grows rotten, and the flavour is lost". The transitory character of the beautiful and the ugly and the flow of one into the other and back are the subject of an Egyptian myth about Isida. The lovely and young Isida was forbidden to go to a certain island. She turned into an old woman, deceived the boatman and made the crossing. Once on the island, she said the incantations and turned back into a beautiful young woman.

A theoretical study of the ugly in art was begun by Aristotle. The form of a work of art is always beautiful, but its subject may include the ugly. "Though the objects themselves may be painful to see, we delight to view the most realistic representation of them in art, the forms for example of the lowest animals and of dead bodies." This pleasure is produced by the satisfaction of recognition of reality which is brilliantly depicted by the artist.

The ugly and the beautiful are the opposites united by a thousand ties. Shakespeare said that "for if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion" considering this phenomenon as part of nature and society.

The ugly repels, while the beautiful delights by simply being there. What is the ugly? To define it as the opposite of the beautiful would be logically insufficient. Baudelaire said that an ugly face is devoid of harmony, it is pathological and uninspired and has no light, no inner life.

The ugly is an aesthetic characteristic of the objects whose natural properties have a negative significance for society at the present level of its development but do not seriously threaten it, as man is able to control the objects possessing this characteristic.

The Base

The consciousness of ancient Egyptians evolved the idea of the base as the opposite, of the sublime, although the word designating it had not yet been invented. In the evenings, the Sun plunged the world and the people into a "base" state. In a hymn in honour of Aton, an Egyptian poet described the sunset and the horror of death which gripped the people at that moment. For the first time in the history of aesthetics, the base was mentioned by Aristotle in a discussion of the aesthetic qualities of life imitated by art. As an example, he gave the character of Menelaus in Euripides's *Orestes* whose baseness was not caused by necessity.

The base is the extreme degree of the ugly and a highly negative quality. It is embodied in the negative forces which are a menace to humanity, as the people have not yet bent them to their will. If man does not control his own social relations, this spells disaster. All phenomena connected with this menace are perceived as base (nuclear war, Nazism, etc.).

The baseness of war was strikingly demonstrated by the Russian painter Vereshchagin in his *Apotheosis of War*. He dedicated the painting, which shows a pyramid of human skulls, to all "great conquerors" of the past, the present and the future.

Another grave consequence of the inability of the people to control social relations is tyranny. Etienne de La Boetie, a 16th-century French humanist, wrote, "it is indeed the greatest of misfortunes to be dependent on the arbitrariness of the ruler with whom one can never tell whether he is going to be kind, for it is always within his power to be malicious when he wishes it." He considered lack of freedom the result of man's amazing social blindness: the tyrant "would have been defeated had the country refused to be enslaved. There is no need to take anything away from him, the thing is not to give him anything. The country does not have to do anything for its benefit, it only has to do nothing to its own detriment. I do not demand that you fight against him or assault him; merely withdraw your support, and you will see him crumple down under his own weight and fall into pieces, like a colossus whose foundation has been knocked out from under him." For La Boetie, the baseness of tyranny lies in its being socially ungovernable, in the subjection of the people to the tyrant's egotistical whims.

Music has learnt to depict evil – the ugly or the base – in the 19th-20th centuries, i.e. comparatively recently (Dmitry Shostakovich Symphony No. 7). Before that, evil was reflected indirectly (Mozart, Beethoven) through intense struggle and the effort that was needed to overcome the ugly and the base.

The Horrible

The horrible is not far distant from the tragic and is at the same time opposite to it. Tragedy is optimistic, while the horrible is hopeless and endless. It is a disaster or a death which contain nothing to make it bearable, nothing to show that the horror will be over; the horrible cannot be controlled by man but dominates him. In the tragic, the affliction is sublime, it ennobles man who remains the master of the situation and asserts his rule over the world even in death. In the horrible, man is the slave of circumstances. The horrible was the dominant element of man's attitude towards the world in the Middle Ages. Mediaeval religious consciousness was very aware of the Inferno which awaited the sinner, and of the coming Doomsday.

In *Hamlet*, the horrible is a shade of the tragic. The Ghost's story follows the rules of this aesthetic category:

*Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatched.
Cut of f even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled;
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!*

During the periods when a certain system of human relationships and mental attitudes to the world is being shattered and nothing has yet been evolved to take its place, man frequently perceives the universe as a place of horror. The collapse of a historic order is regarded by contemporaries as a global catastrophe. Pieter Breughel conveyed hopeless horror in his painting *The Parable of the Blind*: mankind is represented as a file of blind people heading towards a precipice.

The category of the horrible includes those phenomena with which man does not feel at ease and which bring him disaster and death that cannot be put right even during the course of history (hence the pessimistic outlook). In Jose Ribera's painting *The Suicide of Cato Uticensis*, the character has nothing in common with the great figures of Shakespeare's tragedies. His death is not tragic but horrible: the social element and the emotions shown in it are reduced to a biological terror of death and the instinct of self-preservation. Man is shown as a wretched being which has come into the world without any definite purpose. When he dies, the world resounds with his cry of agony, anguish and blind despair.

The work of Franz Kafka shows the reader a horrible world which is mad and full of blind forces hostile to man. The horror there is matter-of-fact, "ordinary", routine.

Karl Günther Simon, a West German critic, said that the insanity of the world is a fact which art cannot disregard: "A lunatic asylum has entered, freely and shamelessly, into the world which is around us every day and which is losing logic and causal relationships. We ... hear stories about inventors of the atomic bomb who have taken monastic vows, and movie stars who have turned Buddhists. We are fed up with the age of positivism; the rationalistically optimistic progress is standing before the abyss opened up by the atomic bomb." This characteristic contains more than a touch of fear caused by the complexity of the age, and global historical pessimism. In such an atmosphere, the tragic becomes irrational and is transformed into the horrible. The ugly, the base and the horrible are *negative values, negative aesthetic characteristics of the world* portrayed by art and reflected in the system of aesthetic categories. In 20th-century art, they occupy a place of importance. For instance, they are essential for understanding the works dealing with the horrors of Nazism, and it is no accident that they have been accepted as independent categories of modern aesthetics.

Integrity and Fragmentation

Certain aesthetic characteristics of life and art which in the past had the status of notions have expanded and are now ranked as *categories* by modern students of aesthetics. It is quite legitimate to regard integrity and fragmentation as aesthetic categories which can assist understanding of contemporary art.

Let us consider from this angle the principal characters of Graham Greene's novel *The Quiet American*. Fowlaire, a British newspaper correspondent in Vietnam, is a sceptic and a cynic, a disillusioned man who retains a position of neutrality in the dramatic situation he is witnessing. With all that, Fowlaire is not devoid of dignity and honour; he is also brave and intelligent. His character and behaviour are a mixture but not a blend of contradictory emotions, thoughts and acts. He is sympathetic towards the Vietnamese liberation army and the civilians who die as a result of Pyle's provocations, but he does not censure the pilot bombing a Vietnamese village. His inner world is torn asunder; his thoughts and feelings are devoid of harmony, his character – of a principle that would hold it together, his consciousness – of

attainable ideals, and his actions – of a single purpose. He is an observer, a loner, although he lives among people and a war is going on all around him. His nature is a monad separated from life and deprived of inner completeness.

Torn by conflicting motives, Fowlaire is forced to overcome his discord with life and the fragmentation of his consciousness. In a situation when his interference can prevent bloodshed and save innocent people, he abandons the position of a casual observer and assists the Vietnamese in getting rid of "the quiet American". The other protagonist of the story, "the quiet American" Pyle, seems to be all of a piece. His inner world is a product of modern civilisation whose goal is to shape standard mass consciousness. He does not have a shadow of a doubt when the explosions he has prepared kill women, children and old people. But Pyle's wholeness is misleading. It rests on profound subjectivism, which literally ignores everything that goes against his goals and ideals. The powerful propaganda apparatus has uprooted all contradictions from his consciousness. And, although basically he is a kind man, Pyle has become an automaton which possesses all the cruelty bred by narrow-mindedness. In its most complete form, this type of character was fostered in Nazi Germany with its cult of the "strong", "superior" personality, absolutely free in its actions and absolved from having a conscience. This sort of "wholeness" is in fact the worst kind of fragmentation.

Fragmentation characterises many trends of modernism. Moreover, it is often the chief reason for their aesthetic impact. Jean Cassou, the French art critic, noted that the art of today is turned towards the past, the long-gone harmony and completeness of the classics. There is a longing for another age of primitivism, which would give back to man the lucidity of his childhood days, return strength to his arm, and freshness to his language. The cost the artists are willing to pay to attain this ideal may be quite high – adoption of a primitive artistic mentality. The success of primitivist painting can be explained by its integral world outlook, but this is the integrity of simplification and imitation of a child's mentality (Pirosmanishvili's *Fisherman Among the Rocks*, Henri Rousseau's *The Poet and His Muse*, *The Dream*, etc.).

However, is it justifiable to regard integrity or fragmentation of the character's inner world as an aesthetic and not a moral quality? Fragmentation is, of course, a feature of a person's moral character, but ethics here is blended with aesthetics. The ethical, intellectual and emotional properties of the person become an object of direct aesthetic assessment. Discussing the aesthetic significance of the ethical in Russian 19th-century literature, Maxim Gorky

said that it possessed the beauty of justice. Lev Tolstoy regarded art as a way of distinguishing between good and evil, and good, as one of the chief sources of art. He wrote, "Art is the ability to show that which should be, that which all the people should strive to attain, that which benefits people most. Humanity has already lived through two ideals of this kind and is now living for the third. The first was utility: everything useful was a work of art and was regarded as such; then came the beautiful, and now – that which is kind, good and moral."

Indeed, aesthetic qualities changed as humanity progressed. Originally, the utilitarian, the directly useful was perceived as beautiful. Later, the relationship between social practice and the aesthetic grew more complicated, and later still, the aesthetic value of the moral came to be appreciated.

Aesthetic Notions and Their Relation to Aesthetic Categories

Apart from aesthetic categories, the system of aesthetics includes a number of notions, which are less "capacious" and significant than categories. They may reflect certain aspects of basic aesthetic categories (the graceful, for instance, is one of the manifestations of the beautiful), or describe the aesthetic qualities of life and art which at a given moment are not universal.

There is no insurmountable barrier between aesthetic notions and categories; the former may sometimes rise to the level of the latter. When a certain aesthetic quality is given priority in the principal works of art produced by a given epoch, aesthetics may single it out as an independent category.

Sentimentalism and later bourgeois melodrama developed the aesthetic quality of *the touching*, and various aesthetic systems studied it as an aesthetic category. Mediaeval art, which leaned towards asceticism, was alien to the delightful as an aesthetic quality; therefore, the aesthetics of that period could have nothing to do with it. The desire to satisfy the refined aesthetic needs filled Renaissance and baroque art with images which lacked simplicity and sublimity, and launched a search not so much for beauty as that which delights. *The delightful* – sensual beauty – ceased to be a shade of the beautiful and emerged as an independent aesthetic category, which was included into the system of aesthetics.

The less sensual and the more spiritual beauty is, the more sublime it is, and vice versa: the more sensual, the more delightful. L. Saccetti, a professor in St. Petersburg, characterised this category in the following way: the delightful is beauty which appeals to external feelings, which "gives sensual pleasure by its

ability to *flatter* external feelings". The delightful as an aesthetic quality started to grow into an independent category when art began to take an interest in the nude human body which in addition lacked the cool impassivity of antiquity (compare the Venus of Milo, Giorgione's *Venus*, and *The Venus* by Poussain). Landscapes, still life and household objects all came to be perceived in the light of the delightful. Renaissance used it as an argument and a weapon against mediaeval ascetic consciousness.

The material for the study of the delightful was looked for not only in contemporary art but also in the art of the past; a search began in the history of art for the delightful as an independent aesthetic quality. William Lecky, a 19th-century English aesthete, wrote that the delightful glorified the joy and pleasures of life. In his opinion, it had an empathy with contemporary world outlook based not on the demode ascetic but on the fashionable "industrial" philosophy. The motto of the first was mortification of the flesh, and of the second – evolution. The first sought to subdue, and the second, to enhance desires.

Schopenhauer admitted that the delightful existed, but considered it a negative aesthetic quality representing the spirit of subjective coarse lust. He was convinced that the delightful should be shunned by art. But a number of other theorists, including John Ruskin, Theodor Lipps, and Paul Souriau, treated the delightful as an independent aesthetic quality which should be studied as a category in its own right.

It is impossible to understand the aesthetics of a folk fairy tale without the notion of *the miraculous*, which is also important for a critical analysis of the work of Dostoyevsky, Hoffmann and Gogol, and many other phenomena of art. This notion was introduced into aesthetics and studied by Denis Diderot, who wrote that the miraculous must become the principal subject of art since in his opinion it reflected the philosophical quality of art and allowed it to crystallise human experience. 'Diderot maintained that miraculous and unusual events helped reveal the beautiful. The aesthetic diversity and wealth of life and art are so great that besides the traditional and stable categories, such as the beautiful, the sublime, the tragic, and the comic, new aesthetic categories and notions are emerging which represent the qualities that are intricately and flexibly interwoven in life and art.¹

The Quality of Polyphony and Interrelation of Aesthetic Qualities in Life and Art

The relationship between man and the world around him is a complex and many-faceted one. Life is fluid and changeable, and man, while remaining himself, is both equal and unequal to himself in every given situation, is both unchanged and changed. He has his good sides and his bad sides, he may be both comic and heroic, etc. To portray the *interrelation* of the personality and the circumstances by the means available to art is to depict life in all its diversity, to show it as possessing a great variety of aesthetic qualities.

An element of comedy is introduced into Shakespeare's tragedies by the wit of a jester. In them, the mixture of the sublime and the base, the fearsome and the funny, the heroic and the flippant is so bizarre that Voltaire, whose taste was nurtured by the aesthetically monotonous classicist art, even called Shakespeare a drunken savage. A fanciful mixture of opposing characteristics is also a feature of Cervantes's work. Don Quixote's character seems to be made up of all aesthetic qualities possible, combining as it does the sublime, the beautiful, the aesthetically negative, the romantic, the wonderful and the moving. The background for this variety is a blend of the tragic and the comic. Lope de Vega, the Spanish dramatist, maintained that a combination of the tragic and the comic in drama is quite legitimate, since this is a feature of life itself. Similar views were advanced by Lessing, who wrote that nature itself gives man an example of how to unite ordinariness and sublimity, mirth and gravity, sadness and merriment.

The flexible interaction and interpenetration of various aesthetic qualities in a realistic character do not make him vague. In other words, *aesthetic polyphony typical of a character in a work of art does not exclude his aesthetic dominant*. The character is either predominantly sublime, or comic, or tragic.

Let us examine the Countess, a character in Pushkin's novel *The Queen of Spades*. The inner resources of that "half-dead old woman" have been expended during a long lifetime. Her intellect and feelings are like embers which glimmer and send up smoke; on no account can they be called rich and varied. And yet, being aesthetically rich, the character is far from flat: the Countess combines beautiful, ugly, sublime, noble, base and hideous, tragic and comic traits. The aesthetic dominant of the character is the base and the ugly. It is a foundation of sorts upon which the other aesthetic qualities are displayed. The very physical decay of the old woman is repulsive: the last of an old aristocratic family, she seems to belong not only to another century but to the other world as well.

The very aesthetic dominant of the character is rich in shades. Here is one of her most graphic descriptions: "She participated in all the vanities of high

society, dragging herself to balls, where, seated in a corner, rouged and dressed according to the fashion of ancient days, she was the hideous and essential ornament of the ballroom; newly-arrived guests went up to her and bowed low, as though in obedience to an established ritual, after which nobody took any notice of her." Every link in the chain of meaning in that phrase enhances the main aesthetic characteristics. The Countess is a senile, dying participant in all the *vanities* of high society (the word serves to disparage both the society and the Countess herself). She does not go but *drags* herself to balls. The *corner* in which she sits makes one think of a useless thing shoved there. The *rouge* on her face stresses her decrepitude and ugliness. She is a "*hideous and essential ornament*" of the ballroom to which the guests go up to bow, the embodiment of baseness to which high society makes obeisance "as though in obedience to an established ritual". But even the vain high society, which is itself morally and intellectually negligible, cannot be bothered with this "hideous ornament"; therefore, having made the required bow, no one "took any notice of her". The Countess' ugliness and the emptiness and uselessness of her whole life are enhanced by yet another shade of the ugly – *her likeness to a corpse*: "two footmen were half-lifting, half-pushing the old dame through the door"; "Hermann saw the footmen come out, supporting on either side the bowed form of the old woman in her sable cloak"; "the Countess, more dead than alive, entered and sank into the high-backed arm-chair"; "utter absence of thought could be seen in her dim eyes". As portrayed by Pushkin, the Countess is disgusting, which is especially so when she is getting ready for bed: "The yellow dress embroidered in silver dropped to her swollen feet. Hermann was a witness of the horrid secrets of her toilet." The baseness of the Countess also makes itself felt in her manner of speaking: each phrase of hers is an order, a peremptory shout, an ironic remark, an attempt to find fault, or whim of a petty tyrant. But the character also has diametrically opposite traits. In certain respects, she is beautiful and even majestic – or, rather, used to be in her youth. The portrait hanging in her bedroom shows "a young belle with an aquiline nose, her powdered locks, brushed up from the temples, adorned with a rose", and this is how she emerges from the story told by Tomsy.

Beauty illuminates the old woman's last minutes. Her ugliness is conveyed through her cadaverous appearance, while her beautiful qualities become apparent in liveliness. The last flashes lit up her face and for a moment humanise it. The appearance of Hermann, a strange man, in her bedroom made a strong impression on her: "Suddenly an indescribable change came

over her death-like countenance. Her lips ceased their twitching, and a light came into her eyes." The name of the lover of her young days returned life to her features: "The Countess was visibly embarrassed. Some powerful emotion showed itself on her face." For the third time, she "showed signs of powerful emotion" when she saw a pistol in Hermann's hand. And, finally, the instinct of self-preservation proved so strong that once again the fire of life ran through her at the moment immediately before her death: "She jerked back her head and raised her hand, as if to ward off a shot. Then she fell against the back of her chair ... and remained motionless."

If a person is capable of strong feelings, if even at the hour of death the beautiful light of animation sparkles at a memory of the romance of youth, that means that no matter how dreary and base the person, he still possesses beautiful, admirable traits.

The Countess is also a *tragic* figure. It is tragic that she shows any animation only in the last minutes of her life. Her death is enveloped in mystery and lit by the shimmering light of immense dramatic tension, which is echoed by nature itself: "The weather was atrocious, the wind howled and snow fell in moist flakes. The lamps burnt dimly, the streets were deserted." The leitmotives of the tragic and intense scene of the night *rendez-vous* are the pleading of Hermann and the silence of the Countess. The mounting tension is resolved by a horrible finale: the old woman "fell against the back of her chair ... and remained motionless".

"Come, you are not a child! – said Hermann, taking her hand. – I ask you for the last time – do you intend to tell me what these three cards are? Yes or no?" "The Countess made no answer. Hermann saw that she was dead."

As the ugly and the base in the character are highlighted by the beautiful and the sublime, so are the tragedy and horror highlighted by irony and satire. The deathliness and the fantastical transmogrification of the Countess into the Queen of Spades are very close to objectivation, a device frequently used in satire. The Countess, a symbol of the past century, mocks, as Fate itself, the spirit of appropriation and adventurism of the new epoch personified by Hermann. The irony of Fate is made real through the irony of the old woman. For the first time, a leer appears on her face as she is lying on the bier: "Then he [Hermann] rose, as white as the corpse itself, ascended the steps to the bier, and bent down... It seemed to him that the dead woman looked at him quizzically, and winked." Later, irony is written on the face of the Queen of Spades: "Your queen is covered", – said Chekalinsky urbanely.

"Hermann started: it was true – instead of an ace there lay the Queen of

Spades. He could hardly believe his eyes, and wondered how he could have made such a blunder.

"And all of a sudden, it seemed to him that the Queen of Spades was narrowing her eyes laughing at him. He was struck by an extraordinary likeness. "The old woman! – he cried in horror."

The figure of the Countess is a flexible system of aesthetic qualities which *dialectically interact*, pass into each other and complement and highlight each other. But dominating and ruling her character is deathliness. In the end, this manifestation of ugliness acquires a "material" form, becomes fully developed, and turns into real death: "The dead old woman sat there as if turned to stone; there was an expression of profound calm on her features." The rich combination of aesthetic characteristics allows art to reflect the existing aesthetic wealth of life itself.

¹ A peculiar system of aesthetic qualities is represented by the gallery of Japanese masks portraying the traditional personages who possess fixed aesthetic characteristics (Owari, Shimbato, Tengu, Tengu-Karasu, etc.).

AESTHETICS: THE SOCIOLOGY OF ART

Aesthetics: The Branch of Knowledge Dealing with the Social Nature of Art

ART AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON

Art: a Model of Man's Activity and a Reflection of the World

Individual sciences and branches of spiritual and practical activity concern themselves with different sides of life and make it possible for the various aspects of the personality to take shape and realise themselves thus creating certain cultural values. Art is the field which concerns itself with the world in its entirety, it helps the personality to remain whole and culture and human experience to preserve continuity and stay free from fragmentation.

This universal historic purpose of art makes it polyfunctional, necessary and valuable for mankind throughout the whole course of its development despite the fact that in an advanced social system each function of art has a "duplicate": art is cognition, but that is also a function of science; art is education, but there is also pedagogics which deals with its problems; art is a language and a channel of information, but there exist natural languages and the modern mass media; art is activity, but the chief form of human activity transforming the world is labour. The "duplicates" are not substitutes for the many functions of art and, vice versa, art does not take the place of any single form of human activity, since it models it in its own way. The key to understanding the nature of art is in those of its functions which belong and are unique to it – its aesthetic and hedonistic functions.

Even in antiquity, man noticed that art "educates while entertaining". The aesthetic impact of art and the enjoyment man derives when creating or being on the receiving end of art, its educational, informative and cognitive functions, allow it to pass on experience, analyse the condition of the world and, to a certain extent, foretell the future. They also render art its power of suggestion. The set of these issues inevitably leads the researcher up to the question of human nature, which is what determines the qualities of art. In the 19th century, Marx and Engels arrived at the interpretation of man from the standpoint of his active nature.

The doctrine of an active, creative individual was developed by A. Gramsci, the Italian aesthetician. He maintained that man is the process of his actions. This interpretation of the problem has formed the basis of a contemporary

theory which states that the structure of the individual is determined by the principal elements of the structure of human activity.

The accepted scheme of human activity – labour, cognition, communication and assessment – implies the activity directed from this object towards the outside, and not the activity directed towards the inside, i.e. the self-creation of the personality. But the latter is made possible by the development of man's subjective powers outside, and is carried out through them only. On the other hand, only a personality with a high degree of self-awareness can work, assess, communicate and cognise. Personality is a sum total of social ties, while its social ties are that through which it expresses and realises itself. Research into the problems of art should rest on the model of human activity which consists of two elements; each of these elements can be further subdivided.

1. The activity of the subject directed outwards: a) cognition; b) assessment; c) labour; d) communication.

2. The activity of the subject directed inwards a) self-cognition; b) self-assessment; c) self-creation; d) self-communication (autocommunication).

Autocommunication can be carried out in two ways; first, by silently debating a complicated problem with oneself and weighing the pros and cons, through an inner monologue which assumes the form of a dialogue, the best method of discovering the truth which is founded on the dialectically contradictory quality of phenomena; second, through the relationships between consciousness and the subconscious mind. The latter was discovered by realistic art which has mastered the method of psychological analysis (consider the work of Lev Tolstoy or Fyodor Dostoyevsky) and was able to describe both the stream of consciousness in its relation to society and the subconscious processes in their connection with consciousness and in their manifestation through speech.

A link exists between the "extra" and the "intra" types of activity. Working, assessing, cognising, and communicating with others, man unfolds, enhances and develops his essential powers. On the other hand, each type of self-assessment, self-cognition, self-creation and autocommunication is a process which does not only shape and build the personality but also leads to man's getting actively involved in life.

Education of the personality is sometimes taken to mean that the individual becomes a passive object of external influences, while the barriers put up by the personality's inner sets are disregarded. It is of course possible to influence the sets, purposes and the very foundation of the personality but

this can be done not by affecting man's inner structure but by cooperating with it. Education is always *self-education*, i.e. a process controlled and modified by the individual himself, by his mind and will-power. These truths should be borne in mind if one is to grasp the hedonistic and the aesthetic in art as its necessary essential functions. They cannot be understood without admitting that the personality is a value in its own right and that art affects not only the shaping and modelling of the subject's "outside" activities but also its efforts towards building its own personality.

When, due to certain conditions of its historical existence, art concentrates only on the individual value of an isolated personality while modelling it and influencing it, art for art's sake emerges, which grants that the personality is valuable in itself but neglects the significance of its being included in the system of social relations. It is equally unjustifiable to consider man solely from the angle of his social life and activity forgetting that each personality is unique and presents an independent value and its own needs. One should take into account not only man's social responsibility to history but also the responsibility of society as a whole and art as one of its institutions for the destiny and happiness of man. When the fact that the personality has an absolute value is forgotten, a belief emerges that no one is indispensable and that a person's social functions can be performed by someone else. But when both directions of human activity are taken into account ("outwards" and "inwards"), it becomes apparent that each person is indispensable since he is unique, and that the inner needs of man should be just as adequately provided for by society and art as his socially useful needs. Satisfaction of man's innermost needs multiplies his creative potential thus benefiting society as well.

Art reproduces life in its entirety to prolong and enhance the life experience of man as a unit of society. It is a model of man's vital activity built from images. "Duplicating" both types of human activity, it recreates the personality in its diversity and integrity. It affects the structure of man's consciousness and activity interacting with the experience he derives from life and art. Ideally, the model of life built by realistic art should be isomorphous and similar to life. But art does not amount to realism. A romantic or Classicist work does not aim to produce a good likeness of the world. Truth in art may assume different forms at different stages of history; art can be faithful to life in more ways than one. The degree and nature of verity in art are historically flexible and depend on changes in the types and forms of man's activity. "Showing life as it really is" is not a universal law of art but only one of the stages in the

evolution of man's artistic consciousness, a historically conditioned regularity of realistic thinking. *The general law of art is the correspondence of artistic consciousness to historically concrete forms of man's activity.*

Art: the Condensed Expression of Social Practice, the Crystallised Experience of Communication

In his *Theses on Feuerbach*, Karl Marx established a connection between thinking and social practice, a discovery which is acquiring new facets with the advance of science and society, especially in the light of recent research into the psychology and physiology of higher nervous activity which show that the structure of the psyche corresponds to the structure of human and animal activity. All changes in the human psyche are determined by the changes in man's activity.

The way of life of animals is adaptive, and their psyche corresponds to it; man acts in order to transform, and this has produced a psyche which is qualitatively new both structurally and functionally.

For a long time, man's psychic activity was regarded as a mirror reflection of the world, as producing models or photographs of life. The fact that human consciousness is active and able to transform was ignored.

Rut perception and cognition of the outside world rest on man's past experience. Our analysers operate in accordance with the principle of feedback: having evolved a synthetic image of an object in the brain, our psyche projects it back onto the object verifying the accuracy of the image and trying to single out those of its elements which are already part of its experience. This work goes on until an image is evolved which has the maximum degree of correspondence to the object. The mechanism of assessment also functions according to the principle of feedback. In other words, perception, sensation and especially formation of a notion and assessment are a highly complicated dynamic process.

The art of the past has also seen human psyche as a mirror reflecting the world. The characters created by Laurence Sterne, Henry Fielding and Charles Dickens see an object or a person and express their views of them. Man was invariably equal to himself. But Lev Tolstoy already portrayed the personality in evolution, in movement. Man's inner world is a stream which is now shallow and now deep. When Prince Andrei is lying wounded after the battle of Austerlitz, his thoughts at first bounce back, as it were, from a cloud and a tree within his field of vision. He thinks about them as any other character before him would have done. But gradually his thoughts expand to embrace

all his life experience. In other words, the author presents a picture of the motion of the human psyche, of the dialectics of man's soul.

19th-century realism has shown that man's consciousness is shaped in the process of his life in society and that his psyche embraces all his life experience. It also changes. Prince Andrei is not the same person in different parts of the novel. This is not just communication with the world but mutual enrichment. The hero affects the world and vice versa. The consciousness reflects and transforms the world, while the world shapes the consciousness. Henri Pieron, the French psychologist, called a newborn baby "a candidate for the position of man" who attains the status of a full-fledged member of the human race only after a certain minimum of social and historical experience has become his. In this, he is assisted by mental activity.

Thinking pursues three ends: 1) to critically "sublate", condense and systematise socio-historical experience and express it in forms which can be "digested" by man; 2) to understand life in the light of this experience and on the basis of new requirements advanced by social practice; 3) to work out recommendations as to how life can be made better.

The world has many facets, and man's social needs are numerous; consequently, the forms of social consciousness are numerous too. Art has emerged to deal with a specific set of issues relating to social activity directed towards cognising and transforming the world. The key to the understanding of the uniqueness of the artist's mental attitudes and the nature of art can be found in the structure of social practice and the social and historical experience of mankind.

Man alone is able to perceive the world as something outside himself; therefore, man alone can become the subject of activity. But as a unit of a certain social structure, he is also its object. Combining the two roles, man takes part in changing social and natural phenomena and is himself changed in the process. He is a human being only to the extent to which he is a creator. Anyone – a scientist, a worker, an artist – who explores the world as a personality and shapes it according to the laws of beauty can be such a creator. Man has two systems of valuation: the first is based on objective factors (assessment of objects from the point of view of their significance for social production), and the second – on personal factors (the person's individual experience which unites the subjective and the historically determined).

Aesthetic valuation is personal in the sense that it reflects a stable and essential socio-historical relationship between the subject and the object. The

universal and objective value of a beautiful thing is revealed through personal appreciation.

Art exerts an influence over the audience and is itself influenced by this audience. "Art – the recipient" is a system resting on the principle of feedback. The object of art makes the public able to understand and enjoy it, i.e. art creates not only the object for the subject but the subject for the object.

Art involves the audience into generating ideas and makes the reader, spectator or listener incorporate ideas in personal form produced by it. Hence the many variants of the artistic idea: it assumes a different form in each mind. In science, the only variable is the degree of appropriation of ideas, while in art, both the degree of appropriation and the content itself vary; the recipient projects the social and historical experience contained in a work of art onto his individual experience evolving a personal approach to life and to the problems under discussion.

Art reflects more than just the artist's personality. Describing something which is essential, stable and important for a great number of people, the artist presents it in a personal manner, i.e. shows the world through himself. Thus he makes the public appropriate as its own his experience enhanced by his knowledge of the people and life.

An actor, for instance, can reproduce life only through his body, voice and intonation; he appropriates the experience of thousands of people and transmits it through the character he portrays. But even playing a part he represents collective experience in the light of his own personality. To convey the experience that is not his own in a personal form, the artist must "digest" this experience, live, as it were, a thousand lives incorporating them into his world. It would be incorrect to assume that in art, thinking is invariably concrete, while in theory – invariably abstract. Scientific thought is concrete but universal, it is an abstraction which embraces the truth, and the latter is always concrete. Theoretical definitions form a network which our consciousness uses to grasp the concrete quality of a phenomenon. The image in art is not only concrete but contains, in a sublated form, the results of thinking.

The artist thinks *in images*, for there is no other way to be both general, concrete and personal.

The most sublime, social emotions are a form of expressing, fixing and assessing the historical and social experience of relations, and that can best be done through the image. Human psyche assesses the meaning by forming notions, opinions and conclusions (the realm of science); and personal appeal

through emotions. A distinction should be drawn between the emotions which emerge in everyday life and those caused by art; the latter are a product of generalisation and assimilation of the experience or relations (the realm of art).

Emotions which arise in the course of daily life reflect a mixture of biological and social experience; emotions aroused by art have a social character. The biological in them may be present, but only as the background or an element. In the emergence of the former, a prominent part is played by the accidental and momentary; the latter are prompted by the socio-historical, i.e. that which is essential, stable and important for a great number of people. The emotions we experience in daily life can be negative and positive. In art, even tragedy is a source of positive emotions; they are socially valuable, and experiencing them gives man aesthetic delight.

"Daily" emotions can exist in isolation as momentary sensations; emotions aroused by art exist only in an artistic system. To those who have no knowledge of this system, art will say nothing, for emotions appear as a result of crystallising certain experience of relations. A consciousness is always an image of life, a condensed expression of experience. The most primitive image of experience is sensation, next comes perception, and lastly, the formation of notions. The latter is a step from perception to evolving a concept.

They generalise large segments of social practice, reproduce impressions of former experience and process its results. A notion embraces both the significance and the meaning of a phenomenon. Artistic mentality also operates with concepts, directly or indirectly. The conceptual content of a work of art is structurally complex. To make artistic notions accessible to the audience, they have to be made objective, and the image is that element of art which serves this purpose.

Art as a Form of Social Consciousness

For a long time, aestheticians looked for laws governing art outside society. *Reflexions critiques sur la poesie et la peinture* (1719) by Jean Baptiste Dubos explained the evolution of art by atmospheric fluctuations. Fifty years later, Johann Herder brought the solution of the problem somewhat nearer: he maintained that art changes under the influence of climatic factors and depends also on the national character. Hegel considered art a result of the world's global evolution. He explained the movement of art through its various stages (symbolic, classic and romantic) by the stadial evolution of the

Absolute Idea. In the second half of the 19th century, Hippolyte Taine, the French theorist, offered another explanation: art is affected by a combination of the frame of mind and the morals of society; the "prevailing mood" produces certain "spiritual temperature" which affects the development of art, same as physical temperature affects the development of the fauna and flora. Guyau, a French philosopher, believed that art is a function of the social organism.

The classics of Russian aesthetics emphasised the link between art and the conditions of life and connected the merit, significance and content of a work of art with the life of the people (Belinsky).

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels believed that out of the sum of social factors which determine the evolution of the forms of social consciousness, the leading one is the mode of production. Three elements interact in the process of cognition: the object (that which is cognised); the subject and his activity (who cognises and what for); the forms (how, in what form the object is cognised). The world and man's inner life and needs are so rich and diversified that they could not but produce a great number of forms of social consciousness. Philosophy, art, morals, religion, political and legal ideology—these are the forms assumed by the more or less adequate cognition and reflection of the world.

All forms of social consciousness have a number of *common characteristics*. First, man's intellectual and cultural life takes place in concrete historical circumstances. Social being is the material foundation of all forms of social consciousness, which are dependent on the economic system, i.e. the basis. Second, all forms of social consciousness are relatively independent. This is shown by the fact that the level of development of art does not always correspond to the level of economic development. At the time of Shakespeare, England was far from flourishing economically; in 19th-century Russia, art was thriving despite the country's economic backwardness. The relative independence of social consciousness can be accounted for by the direct influence of social struggles on the cultural life of a given society, mutual interaction of the forms of social consciousness, the role of cultural heritage, traditions, technical skills and devices (in art), and the available material accumulated by philosophy and science. Third, all forms of social consciousness do not only reflect life but also exert an influence over it. Finally, in all of them, the process of cognition passes from contemplation to thinking and to action.

Apart from the features they have in common, each form of social

consciousness also has its own field of investigation and concentrates on individual sides and relationships of life. Besides, each has its own functions, object, method, content and laws of internal development, and uses its own forms (scientific laws, philosophic categories, moral norms, artistic images). Art as a specific form of social consciousness is rooted in the world of nature and social relations which form the background of man's daily life. This dependence is the most striking in primitive art created by the peoples standing at a low level of social development. The Australians' hunting dance imitated the movements of kangaroos and emus; the dance of the inhabitants of Kamchatka – those of a bear, and the war dance of New Caledonians reproduced battle scenes and was accompanied by the following dialogue:

"Shall we assault our enemies?"

"Yes."

"Are they strong?"

"No."

"Are they brave?"

"No."

"Shall we kill them?"

"Yes."

"Shall we eat them?"

"Yes."

The art of hunting peoples, such as bushmen or Australians, was dominated by images from the animal world and had no floral motives: these peoples had no agriculture, and the world of plants remained outside the scope of their experience.

In more advanced civilisations, there is a connection between art and the level of social development, the degree of man's familiarity with nature, his ability to put it to use, and the character of production. However, this dependence is not immediate. It is made indirect by the nature of social struggles; besides, art is also influenced by philosophy, morals, politics, religion and other forms of social consciousness, as well as the previously established tradition.

Personality, Class, Nation, Mankind and the Universe in Art

Originally, human society was classless. In a class society, the ideology, psychology, world outlook and mental attitudes reflected by the artist in his work can always be attributed to a definite class or social group.

It is not the artist's social status (his birth, background, contacts and

convictions) but the substance of his work which gives an indication of the class he represents. The class character of art is most strikingly manifested during the periods when social contradictions grow particularly acute. The fact that all cultural values are class-oriented in antagonistic societies leads to the emergence within each national culture of two cultures: the democratic progressive one on the one hand, and the reactionary anti-democratic one on the other. But the artist's consciousness, although conditioned by the class he represents and his nationality, still reflects that which is important to mankind as a whole, and this allows the great works of art to overcome the restrictions imposed by history and class affinity and retain their value indefinitely finding their way into the consciousness of the people living in much later epochs and having entirely different social ideas.

John Donne, the 17th-century English poet, wrote, "any man's *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankind*; And therefore never send to know for whom the *bell* tolls; It tolls for *thee*." Ernest

Hemingway of course used these words as the epigraph to his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. In a laconic form, they establish a link between personality and mankind, between the individual and the universal. Hemingway treats the death of each anti-fascist as a loss sustained by mankind as a whole, be it a Spaniard, an American or a Russian.

Personality – class – nation – mankind are those concrete historical notions and social sources whose interaction determines the structure of the mentality of the artist, who thinks in images.

A poet devoted to his people still does not remain within the restrictions imposed by his nationality but looks for ways to reach every nation.

The dialectics of the individual, the particular and the universal are part of the very foundation of artistic creativity. Beauty is an essential feature of a work of art. Guided by its laws in his exploration of the world and everything in it, the artist always assesses it from the point of view of its significance to mankind. The principle of universal value is at the very roots of art, which is essentially humanitarian and internationalist.

But the international is not the only cornerstone of art: there are also the national and the class approaches, which in fact determine the very understanding of what is universally valuable. The more original the artist's national approach, the greater the amount of the precious unique information and experience of relations contained in his work. At the same time, its universal appeal is the greater the more closely the general human and the international are interwoven with the class and the national. That is a major

condition of attaining great heights in art and making a work of art a world classic.

An exact definition of the national as an aesthetic category was provided by Nikolai Gogol: "A truly national approach does not amount to a description of a sarafan but implies conveying the spirit of the people. The poet remains loyal to it even if he describes a totally strange world but sees it through the eyes of his nation, the eyes of all people, when he feels and speaks in such a way that it seems to his fellow-countrymen that they feel and speak themselves."

The problem of national cultures has recently grown particularly acute. Exact and up-to-date definitions which draw the line between patriotism and nationalism and reveal the truly national in a given culture can be found in the works of Academician Likhachev: "True patriotism means sharing the nation's cultural riches and learning from other nations. Nationalism erects a wall separating its culture from the rest, and thus impoverishes and even destroys it. A culture must be open... Patriotism is the noblest of feelings. It is in fact more than a feeling, it is a major aspect of the individual and social culture of the spirit when man and the whole people rise over themselves to pursue suprapersonal goals. Nationalism is the foulest of evils humanity suffers from. As any other evil, it hides and exists in the dark, and only pretends to be bred by love for one's country. In actual fact it is bred by malice and hatred for other peoples and that part of its own people which does not share the nationalistic views. Nationalism breeds uncertainty and weakness and is itself bred by them."

Relations between nations in the field of culture, the interaction of national arts, and cultural communication between different peoples are based on mutual respect and interest. "Hatred for other nations (chauvinism) sooner or later comes to embrace part of one's own nation-at least that part which rejects nationalism. If a person is motivated by the willingness to appreciate strange cultures, this will inevitably lead him to a clear realisation of the value of his own culture. Therefore in its most sublime and conscious manifestations a nationality is friendly, and *actively* so, towards the other nationalities.

Nationalism is an evidence of weakness, not strength, it is usually "contracted" by the weaker peoples which seek to preserve themselves with the help of nationalistic feelings and ideology. But a great nation, a nation which has an advanced culture and rich traditions *must* be kind, especially if the destiny of a national minority is linked to it. A great nation *must* help the small one to preserve itself, its language and its culture" (Dmitry Likhachev).

The national features of art become revealed through the uniqueness of the artist's mentality. This is the key to understanding the originality of art. Different national structures of figurative thinking have different algorithms of the flow of emotions, colours and shades.

Let us consider Martiros Saryan's painting *Armenia*. It is flooded with the bright sun of the south. The sky is almost white-hot, it is reflected on the snow-covered mountain peaks and forms a pattern of light and shadow on the ground repeating the outlines of the trees. The people's bright garments match the luxuriant nature, their colours echo the colours of the mountains, fields and orchards. The people and nature are one, the influence is mutual: the people humanise nature, while it leaves a stamp of festivity and rather severe sublimity on them. Only an artist whose life has passed in the hot sun of the south beside the burning-hot mountains could see the world like this. The sun is almost at its zenith, and the shadows are barely visible at people's feet. The joyous festival of Armenia, the heyday, the zenith of the life of the ancient and young nation bursts forward from the canvas, which is permeated with the national spirit.

The national experience of life and art is as unique as it is reproduceable. It is reproduceable since all the people live and create in accordance with universal social laws. It is unique since these laws find individual, specific expression in the history of every nation. The dialectics of the national and the international, the personal, the class-conditioned and the universal is conveyed by the art of each country.

What is then the universal in art? It has two aspects: the international (that which corresponds to the interests of all contemporary peoples) and the universally human (that which relates to man as a race).

The artist himself, whose personality leaves a stamp on his work, is both a product of his time and nationality and at the same time is a member of the human race, which allows everyone to view him as a brother in the family of men.

The sources of the universally human and international in art are as follows:

- 1) aesthetic assessment and assimilation of the material provided by life in conformity with the laws of beauty require that all phenomena be approached from the point of view of their universal significance; 2) a great work of art always seeks to find a solution to global problems; 3) the artist is a member of the human race.

The National Character of Art

The national character of art is an aesthetic category which is concerned with the relationship of the artist's creative work and his people. This issue has a number of aspects whose examination allows us to explain the essence of this category as the substantial basis of the nature of art itself.

1) *The people as an object of art.* Viewed from this angle, the national character of art was sometimes interpreted too primitively and even incorrectly: it was reduced to the character and life of the "common" people.

Truly national character does not at all mean that the heroes are shepherds, peasants, or bearded Russian merchants; it means that the artist has chosen a crucial point in the history of the people and concentrated on major aspects of their life. The artist must create a character who represents a great national idea. Looking at Brueghel's *Peasants Dancing*, one can say that the subject itself shows the national features of this painting. But the subject cannot serve as the principal criterion of the national spirit.

2) *To reflect the interests of the people* – this is an essential condition which every work of art has to live up to if it claims to have a national character. The artist may choose to depict something far removed from the life of his people, but if he sees it through their eyes, if his interpretation of the things of life is determined by and promotes their needs, his work will have a national character. In other words, the interests of the people is what should determine the position of the artist in life and art, and form the foundation of his aesthetic ideals. The national character also presupposes a specifically national way of dealing with the theme.

3) The people are not only an object but also a *subject of art*. Many artists have stressed participation of the people in the very process of creation of a work of art. Vladimir Mayakovsky said that the people create the language, and the poet is only their apprentice; Mikhail Glinka insisted that music is also created by the people, and the composer only arranges it. Enlighteners, including Giovanni Vico, Johann Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt, were among the first to develop this category emphasising the connection between professional art and the mentality of the people, folklore. The people build a store of images which the artist uses to form his own system.

4) *The people are the creator, carrier and keeper of the language and culture*, and language and culture are a condition of the existence of art and of its ability to produce social results. The nation works out and preserves in its memory all social and conventional prerequisites of art, thanks to which the accepted

system of images and expressive means acquires meaning and becomes clear both to contemporaries and the posterity. Democracy is impossible without the participation of the people in the cultural life of society. Jean Jacques Rousseau said, "Any language not understood by a popular gathering is a language of slaves."

5) Another feature of the national character of art is the fact that *the people are its addressee and consumer (recipient)*. Potential popularity is an essential quality of art which is attained not by simplifying it but by bringing it into accord with the mentality of the people. At the same time, the artist should not follow his audience but be ahead of it raising its understanding of art to a new level and shaping the aesthetic taste of the public.

The idea of the national character of art opposes its hierarchical exclusiveness. It implies accessibility and popularity of art. However, in the history of culture, the people were often deprived of a chance to get access to its highest achievements.

The national character of art is a *historically concrete category*, its content is historically determined.

The national character of art has found and continues to find its most direct and complete expression in primitive society when art was at the mythological stage, and later in folklore: *it describes the people from the point of view of the people, and is created by the people for the people*.

The emergence of the individual artist and professional art has complicated and sometimes even distorted the national character of art. This is proved by the split of art into *art for the elite* and *art for the masses*. The former grows increasingly formalistic and intricate, while the latter in fact becomes pseudo-popular and is reduced to cheap imitation. Both these trends are opposed by art which has a truly national character.

AESTHETICS: THE SOCIOLOGY OF ART

Aesthetics: The Branch of Knowledge Dealing with the Social Nature of Art

ART: ITS FUNCTIONS

The Social and Transforming Function (Art as an Activity)

Art is active and helps to transform the world, since (1) a work of art produces an ideological and aesthetic impact; (2) involving people into purposeful and value-oriented activity, art encourages social reform; (3) artistic creation itself means using imagination to transform the impressions and facts of life. The author turns his material into images building a new kind of reality – the world of art; (4) the artist's activity has one more aspect – processing the material he uses to mould an image. To create a sculpture, a painting, a poem or a symphony means to transform marble, paint, word or sound.

Taken together, all these aspects of art as an activity lend it its power to change society and life. Art is action, transformation, the creation of a world in accordance with the artist's ideals.

In the far from heroic period of its history, the oppressed people of Iceland produced sagas whose heroes were freedom-loving, brave and all of a piece. Through sagas, the people realised their desires by creating a world which had nothing in common with the world they had to live in. But the most amazing thing is that this imaginary world became, to a certain extent, a reality. The sagas shaped the moral character of the people; they are essential for understanding the inner life and the national character of modern Icelanders.

There exists a direct connection between the type of the epoch's artistic consciousness, the ideals advanced by art, and the type of personality. The myths and art of Ancient Greece which widely used them helped mould the character of the Greek, the type of his approach to life, his mental attitudes and ideas. Renaissance man, who had rejected mediaeval dogmas, was shaped by Renaissance art. The treatment of the theme of love by 17th-century French writers formed the French variety of this feeling, while the eroticism of the 20th-century novel led to the emergence of eroticism in life.

Certain aesthetic doctrines refuse to acknowledge that art is able to change, or treat the function it possesses too narrowly. Advocates of the "art for art's

sake" concept maintain that it cannot be measured by the yardstick of the results it produces, and that it should take man from the life in which he has to act into the world of aesthetic delight. Another opponent of the reformist role of art are the aesthetic doctrines which champion "art for the elite" (Jose Ortega y Gasset).

Mikel Dufrenne, a contemporary French theorist, maintains that a major issue of human history and culture is that of harmony between man and the world and of the individual's inner harmony. According to him, there is not much of this at present; as a result, an individual becomes empty and alienated: he loses the ability to think, since this is done for him, and the ability to speak, since this is dangerous. The outcome is the social inertia, conformism and dehumanisation of man. The antidote to all this is art, which has two sides: the artist's work, and perception of art by the public. This type of activity reconciles man with himself, develops his creative potential, and motivates him. According to Dufrenne, aesthetic experience is the beginning of all roads traversed by mankind. Modern society has distorted the original unity of man and nature and that has given rise to the sense of the aesthetic, which is in fact nostalgia for man's lost natural state. Art in its ideal form gives man back his unity with the world, which in real life may be gone forever.¹

Accepting the social role of art, Dufrenne reduces it to consolation and compensation which in the realm of the spirit are called upon to restore the harmony which is no longer there. Art does compensate, but its socio-transformative impact is not illusory but very *real and effective* indeed. The ideal of harmony of man and the world and man's inner harmony it advances is a means of awakening man's capacity for socially oriented action. Art enhances man's awareness of the loss of harmony in society, shapes his aesthetic ideals, and thus compels him to attempt to raise the world to the level of the ideal. This role of art is particularly obvious in periods of transition.

The "Heuristic" Function of Art (Art as Cognition and Enlightenment)

Plato was convinced that all true artists (even Homer, whom he would have crowned with a laurel wreath) should be banished from the ideal state. For him, art was the lowest form of cognition of the Absolute Idea. He regarded material objects as shadows of the Idea, and art, which analyses and assimilates the concrete, sensual wealth of the world through its system of images, as a shadow of a shadow. At the very start of philosophy, idealism

already questioned the cognitive opportunities of art. Hegel also considered it the lowest form of cognition which in the end was to be supplanted by philosophy and religion.

However, the cognitive potential of art is immense; it cannot be replaced by any other form of man's spiritual activity. One may safely say that Balzac's novels contain more information about the life of French society than the works of contemporary historians, economists and statisticians.

Art is fully capable of reflecting and assimilating those aspects of life which are hardly accessible to science. H₂O, the chemical formula of water, has grasped the law of the existence of this phenomenon, but the phenomenon is more "capacious" than the law. The formula of water is powerless to convey the murmur of a brook which may remind one of a dear voice, the iridescence of waves, the sparkle of the moonlight on the surface of the sea, or the elemental power of the billowing waves so brilliantly depicted by the Russian painter Aivazovsky. Hundreds of properties of water remain outside the boundaries of scientific generalisation, but they can be analysed and reproduced by art, which shows the objective-sensual world *in the infinite variety of its aesthetic qualities*.

Thanks to its concrete sensual character, art is able to discover new aspects in familiar things. In a sense, portrayal of a phenomenon is in itself a discovery. Art penetrates into hitherto unnoticed processes, among which was "the dialectics of the soul" discovered by Lev Tolstoy, and reveals the unusual in the ordinary and the habitual. The artist gives back to things their original charm. Art refines our feelings and teaches us to perceive the world as human beings should. It becomes the lens civilisation places between the human eye and nature.

Oscar Wilde insisted that Turner's paintings created London fogs. This paradoxical aphorism contains the idea of art as an active agent. Art shapes human sensuality and vision of the world, forms an eye able to appreciate the beauty of colour and form, and the ear able to perceive the harmony of sound. The active and the cognitive principles find different expressions in different arts. The forte of the arts which are more active than cognitive, e.g. architecture, is *expression*, while of the more cognitive arts, e.g. easel painting, *representation*. When an architect concentrates on representation, he goes against the nature of his art.

Literature, cinema and theatre can be both expressive and representative.

Art is a means of enlightenment, which is achieved by passing on experience and information, and of education, which is carried out by communicating

experience, habits of thinking and generalising, and a system of mental attitudes. It is "a textbook of life" which is used even by those who dislike ordinary textbooks. The information contained in art is enormous. It adds a great deal to our knowledge of life. Throwing a bridge between individual and collective experience, art helps man to cognise the world and understand his own self.

Art as a Concept **(Art as Research into the Condition of the World)**

It is a mistake to regard art as a sort of illustration of philosophical or political ideas. The artist invariably falls back on his own observations and meditations concerning life to build a complete concept of the world.

Hegel believed, quite erroneously, that art is inferior to philosophy and religion, being a lower form of cognition of the Absolute Idea and a less perfect way to arrive at the truth. He wrote that "*religion* as universal awareness of the truth is an essential *prerequisite* of art".²

B. Croce, an Italian philosopher, defined art as intuition and refused to acknowledge that it has a conceptual meaning which in his opinion is the property of logic alone. Croce considered art a more elementary form of cognition than conceptual cognition. But true art leans towards philosophy, it seeks to solve global problems and mysteries and attain an understanding of the condition of the world. The artist is concerned not only with the destiny of his characters but the destiny of mankind as a whole; his thought embraces the epoch and all history, and he views events and people in historical perspective.

The mysteries of existence puzzled Sophocles and Euripides. In his *Divine Comedy*, Dante constructed a complete system of the Universe. Shakespeare embraced the condition of the world by a single concept. Voltaire developed the genre of the philosophical short story. Analysing society and the individual, Lessing conducted intellectual experiments involving the characters of his plays. He insisted that a thinking artist doubles the value of his work. Goethe's *Faust* contains a profound idea of man and mankind. Beethoven's, Tchaikovsky's or Shostakovich's music, Eisenstein's or Fellini's films, Le Corbusier's buildings are all deeply philosophical and are a perfect expression of the essence of their epoch.

The philosophical approach and the desire to embrace the whole world found brilliant expression in Russian classical literature. The opening lines of its first work marked by freedom of thought are filled with concern for humanity. In

1790, Alexander Radishchev wrote in the dedication to A. M. Kutuzov, which opens his novel *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, "I looked around me, and my soul was stung by the suffering of mankind.... I felt that everyone is able to do something to further the well-being of others."

The historically concrete national idea of abolishing serfdom was developed against the background of universal humanitarian ideals. The poverty and misery of the Russian peasant, "the despotism which is most abhorrent to human nature", spiritual slavery – all these problems are treated by the author of the *Journey* as universal ones, as individual manifestations of universal suffering.

In his thoughts, Pyotr Chaadayev linked Russia to the rest of the world. In his first *Philosophical Letter* (1829), he laments the fact that it is as it were outside mankind and speaks that it is necessary to change the situation.

Dostoyevsky said that Pushkin was a poet who had a universal appeal. His own genius, too, was "universally humanitarian". Lev Tolstoy advanced the theory of moral self-perfection as the way to resolve the contradictions torturing the world. Dostoyevsky sought to attain an understanding of human nature and of what mankind is like. His consciousness constantly worked at vital problems facing humanity; in that, he was akin to Albert Einstein. A great writer and a great physicist are always concerned with the universal.

The very history of Russia, a country which more than once tied its destiny to that of the world, produced the type of the thinking artist concerned with global problems in his work.

Western culture today has a strong current of anti-intellectualism, which in philosophy originated in Henry Bergson's intuitivism, in psychology – in the teaching of Sigmund Freud, and in art – in such trends as surrealism with its principles of the "intellectual defeat", "automatic writings", "epidemics of dreams" and "experiments in switching off the mind". But on the whole, 20th-century culture also demonstrates a leaning towards the philosophical approach. Suffice it to recollect the work of Brecht, Frisch or Durrenmatt.

Hegel predicted the death of art, but it happened to have more viability than he had expected. Art cannot be ousted by thought, but the tendency towards intellectualism is there; the realistic art of the 20th century is proof enough of that, showing a growth of the role of thinking in the general sum of creative imagery.

Anticipation **(Art in the Role of Cassandra, or Art as Prediction)**

Cassandra prophesied the fall of Troy when the city was still powerful and flourishing. Art has always been like Cassandra in its ability to foresee the future.

One of the features of man's intellectual activity is the ability to overcome information gaps and make correct surmises about the present and even the future phenomenon even if the available information is obviously incomplete. Since the time of David Hume, there has existed an opinion that thinking is inductive and tends to arrive at logical conclusions on the basis of generalisation of recurrent phenomena. At the same time, there is a neurophysiological and psychological data showing that thinking proceeds by leaps and bounds and is able to arrive at conclusions not only by means of induction but also on the basis of a single observation or extrapolation, i.e. surmising a probable continuation of events and their development in the future. Science reveals the essence and laws of objective processes, while art concentrates on the nature of man's relationship with the world, other people and himself. If the scientist can surmise as to the future, the artist can portray it. In actual fact, both ways of prognostication are interwoven and complement each other.

There exists the so-called immediate, intuitive knowledge, which implies direct understanding of the truth, i.e. understanding of the objective connection between things not based on proof. The advance of thinking allows us to accept certain truths as self-evident. Among them are pictures of the future conjured by the artist with a greater or lesser degree of probability and accuracy. This is the basis of many science-fiction and Utopian works of art, which prognosticate, as it were, the future of society.

Literature has been able to look into the future more than once.

Jules Verne's *Nautilus* covered 80,000 kilometres under water long before the first submarine was built (*Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*). Before becoming reality, space flights and lasers were described in Jules Verne's *De la terre a la lune* and Alexei Tolstoy's *Aelita* and *The Garin Death Ray*. Science fiction as well as Utopian and anti-utopian works sustained the spirit of Cassandra. They conjured pictures of man's future technology, and tried to imagine society's future structure and envisage the destiny of the personality. There is a kind of science fiction which contains a "warning", making people beware of certain trends of social development. Sometimes it records utter

hopelessness. In Franz Kafka's novel *The Trial* there is a drastic shift of logical accents, a transference from details described in remarkably precise terms to complete irreality. Kafka was concerned with the problem of the forces which are alienated from the personality and hostile to it; yet they are manipulating it. In his opinion, the world is doomed owing to its antihuman nature, and the personality cannot stand up to the metaphysical evil in life. Hopelessness, despair, awareness that the personality is crushed and the world is absurd – that is the sum total of Kafka's predictions. However, history has proved that man's potential, his capacity for resistance and his courageous spirit are strong enough to oppose even the cruellest forms of nazism.

Similar to those of the Delphic oracle, Kafka's prophecies assumed the form of vague, indefinite visions and dreams which can be interpreted in many ways; realistic writers, on the contrary, anticipate the future on the basis of a system of images illuminated by thought. Thomas Mann in his *Doktor Faustus* not only analysed contemporary culture and the condition of the world but prognosticated the ways of their evolution. The tragic story of the composer Adrian Leverkühn is the story of an artist whose work is torn from the inside by formalism and decadent tendencies. The world outlook of the hero is counterbalanced by the position of the author, which makes itself felt on the background of the objective unhurried flow of the story told by Zeitblom, a friend and biographer of the composer. Leverkühn produced technically refined, complicated and rationally calculated musical "artifacts" (artificial constructions). And yet, his *magnum opus*, *The Lament of Doktor Faustus*, was not only the triumph of formalism but also a moan of despair of a whole generation of German intellectuals crushed by Nazism. Contrary to Leverkühn's historical pessimism, Thomas Mann declared that the individual, the nation and mankind are indestructible no matter how hard the ordeals they have to go through; the freedom and happiness of man are inevitable as fate itself and will provide the basis for a resurrection of art. *Doktor Faustus* is full of premonitions which were to come true. "Is it not funny that for a while music regarded itself as a means of salvation and liberation, while like all the other arts it itself needs to be liberated from lofty, high-flown apostasy ... from being left *tete-a-tete* with 'the cream of intellectual society', that is, with the public which will soon disappear, which in fact has already disappeared, so that in the near future art will become completely isolated and doomed to a lonely death if it does not turn to 'the nation' or, to be less romantic, to the people.... Believe me, new art will approach life in a totally different way. It will be more joyous and modest. This is inevitable, and this is happiness....

The coming generation will regard music, and music will regard itself, as a servant of society. No one will any longer be surprised by art without suffering, art which is wholesome in spirit, light-hearted and confiding, art which is friendly towards mankind."

In his satirical comedies, Vladimir Mayakovsky gave a great deal of attention to the future. One of his characters is the Phosphorescent Woman, an emissary of the future, and it is there that the time machine takes the heroes. Mayakovsky's poetry was itself "a ride into the unknown", an effort to foresee. Anticipation and prevision are a sort of a leap, a break-through of poetic thought into the future. In his verse *Sur les prophéties* (On Prophecies), Guillaume Apollinaire wrote,

*All the world is a prophet, my dear Andre Billy,
But people have been persuaded for such a long time
That they have no future that they are forever
ignorant
And born idiots,
That everything's settled and no one even thinks
Of asking whether he knows the future or not.
There is no spirit of religion here
Neither in the superstitions nor in the prophecies
Nor in everything called occultism;
There is only a means of observing nature
And of interpreting nature
With nothing illegal about it.*

The Informative and the Communicative Function of Art (Art as Information and Communication)

Art is a specific type of communication, whose kinship with language has been frequently noted in the history of aesthetics (G. Lessing, J. Herder, A. Potebnya, B. Croce). The communicative plane of the existence of art has provided the basis for its modern semiotic interpretation as a sign system carrying certain information, and a specific channel of communication which serves to socialise individual experience of relations and encourage individual assimilation of collective experience.

Aristotle said that the information contained in a work of art has the quality of probability: the artist shows that which could happen. In Aristotle's opinion, that which did not happen but is probable is to be preferred to that which

actually did happen but is improbable. Such information, built on the principle of probability, is highly valuable from the point of view of the modern theory of information.

Like any sign system, art has its historically and nationally determined code and its own set of conventions. Contacts between nations and assimilation of the culture of the past make these sets universally available, including them into the store of world culture. The communicative and the informative function of art allows people to exchange ideas and get acquainted with historical and national experience which is far removed from them both historically and geographically. Consequently, art enhances the spiritual potential and the unity of mankind.

Information passed on through the language of the dance, painting, architecture, sculpture and applied and decorative art is easier to absorb than information transmitted in words. Therefore, the informative capacity of art is greater than of language. Besides, it is qualitatively superior, for the language of art and literature is richer in metaphor, more flexible, figurative, paradoxical and more perfect aesthetically than a natural spoken language. Art serves to unite people. When two tribes speaking different languages concluded peace, they used to stage a dance whose rhythm brought them closer together.

When in the late 18th-early 19th century Italy was split into small states, duchies and counties, art made it possible for the Italians to continue to regard themselves as a single nation. Art played an equally important role in ancient Russia torn by internecine dissention, and in Germany of the late 18th-early 19th centuries. In the world of today, art facilitates understanding between peoples; it is an effective instrument of peaceful coexistence for states with different social systems.

Art: Its Educational Function (Art as Catharsis; Shaping a Harmonious Personality)

Art has a formative effect on the way man thinks and feels. Other forms of social consciousness each have their own domain: ethics shapes morals, politics – political views, philosophy – the view of the world in general, and science makes man a specialist in this or that sphere, while art affects simultaneously both the mind and the heart, and there is no side of human spirit which is inaccessible to it. Art helps shape a harmonious personality. The Pythagoreans interpreted art as purgation. Aristotle developed and introduced into aesthetics the notion of *catharsis* – purification, a kind of relief

from passions through "similar emotions". Depicting heroes who have passed through terrible ordeals, art excites compassion in the listener or spectator making him go through these ordeals together with the heroes and thus purifying his inner being. But why are "similar emotions" necessary to do this? As a diamond can be cut only by another diamond, so the human spirit is affected only by sublime manifestations of human spirit, as if illuminated by the aesthetic ideal. Aristotle developed these ideas using as his material tragedy and its impact on the audience. But it is probable that in the parts of his *Poetics* which are not extant he also treated the problem of comic catharsis. This supposition tallies with the traditional interpretation of catharsis as a broad aesthetic category which reflects the catharsis-compensatory function of art. In the opinion of certain researchers (a case in point is the American anthropologist A. Wallace), this function is one of the major reasons for art's social value. The French sociologist and theorist of culture Edgar Morin maintains that art gives people a chance to relieve anxiety and tension engendered by life and compensate, at least in part, for the monotony of everyday life.

The catharsis-compensatory function of art has three principal aspects: 1) art as entertainment; 2) art as compensation; 3) art as catharsis. The innate harmony of art affects the inner harmony of the personality keeping up or restoring its psychic balance. The nature of emotion produced by art depends on both the nature of the work of art and the type, life experience, cultural level, and the emotional state of the recipient. The function of art as catharsis (purgation) and compensation helping man to achieve spiritual harmony are the *two principal channels through which the educational and formative roles of art are fulfilled*.

The influence exercised by art has nothing in common with straightforward lecturing; art acts through the aesthetic ideal which is present in the characters of both heroes and villains. Paraphrasing Pushkin, one may say that art "shortens the experience of fast-moving life for us"; it gives one a chance to live the lives of other people and assimilate their experience making it part of one's own. That is the reason why art affects the whole of the personality. The experience of the approach to the world passed on by art enhances the individual's personal life experience doing it in a specific way. Art expands the historically established boundaries of man's experience giving him access to the historically varied experience of mankind; equips him with aesthetically organised, selected, generalised and thought-out experience; it is experience "processed" by the artist, and it enables the individual to work out his own

principles and approaches to typical life situations; it is condensed, crystallised experience. A two-hour film dealing with the problems of contemporary life is a sort of synopsis which dissolves in our everyday life experience making it more socially meaningful. The influence of the art enhances the *harmonious individual's social awareness* and asserts his independent value.

Art as Suggestion **(The Impact of Art on the Subconscious Mind)**

Art suggests a certain system of thoughts and feelings; its effect upon the psyche can be almost hypnotic. A work of art frequently can entrance the recipient. Such psychic impact – suggestion – is particularly striking in primitive art and in folklore. On the night before a battle, Australian aborigines used to sing to cause an influx of courage. An ancient Greek legend says that when the Spartans, who were exhausted by a long and hard war, appealed to Athenians for help, the latter contemptuously sent them a lame and puny musician Tyrtaeus instead of reinforcements. But as it happened, they could not have done better. Tyrtaeus's songs raised the morale of the troops, and they emerged victorious.

Suggestion plays an important part in Indian art, a fact which has long been noticed by Indian scholars. Thus, K. Pandey maintains that art is not art if it is not dominated by suggestion.

European cathedral architecture inspired the people with holy awe of the divine forces. The power of suggestion in art is obvious in military marches, which are called upon to cheer up the marching columns of soldiers. In folklore – charms, incantations, lamentations – suggestion is the leading artistic and social function. In time of stress, suggestion in art can acquire a particularly important role. That was so during the hardest period of the Great Patriotic War. S. Kussevitsky, the first foreign performer of Dmitry Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 7*, said, "Since Beethoven, there has been no other composer who had such a tremendous power of suggestion when addressing his audience."

In its desire to be effective, the poetry of the Great Patriotic War resurrected such ancient poetic forms as incantation, curse and commandment. One of the popular songs which glorified courage was based on a sort of chant peculiar to incantation whose purpose is to convince, cast a spell over the listener and instil in him courage and contempt of death as the pattern of behaviour.

*The bullet is scared of the brave man,
The bayonet gives him a miss.*

Lyrical verse of that period was also marked by enhanced power of suggestion. Consider an extremely popular poem by Konstantin Simonov *Wait for Me*....

*Wait for me, and I'll come back,
Wait and I will come.
Wait through autumn's yellow rains
And its tedium.
Steel your heart and do not grieve,
Wait through winter's haze,
Wait through wind and raging storm,
Wait through summer's blaze.
Wait when others wait no more,
When my letters stop,
Wait with hope that never wanes,
Wait and don't give up.*

In twelve lines, the author uses the word "wait" nine times counting on the hypnotic effect this must produce. The idea behind the repetition, all the power of suggestion accumulated in the word "wait" becomes apparent in the poem's finale:

*Wait for me! Let those who don't
Once I'm back with you –
Let them say that it was luck
That had seen us through.
You and I alone will know
That I safely came,
Spitting every kind of death,
Through that lethal flame,
Just because you learned to wait
Staunchly, stubbornly,
And like no one else on earth
Waited, love, for me.³*

The author's poetic idea was vitally important for millions of people separated by the war. Wartime poetry sought to exert an active and

immediate influence on man's inner self, and as a result turned to time-tested folklore forms. Popular at that time were such ancient poetic forms as vows, orders, dreams, visions, conversations with the dead, appeals to rivers, towns and countries. The vocabulary of such poetry and the anachronistic character of figures of speech ingenuously conveyed the truly popular character of the fight against the Nazi invasion, the fight which was referred to as "the holy war".

The simple but appealing lines by Lebedev-Kumach, *The war you wage is holy. All peoples shall it save* gave a precise idea of the war itself and the poetic response to it. The nation's history loomed behind the words which brought to mind the past of Russia, and a sense of history was essential for strengthening the people's loyalty to their country and for victory itself. Suggestion is the function of art which is very close, though not identical, to its educative function. In crucial historical periods, the magic force of poetry plays a great, and sometimes even the decisive role in the system of art's functions.

The Aesthetic Function of Art (The Role of Art in Shaping a Creative Personality and the Ability to Form Value Judgements)

In antiquity, the aesthetic function of art was already fully appreciated. The Indian poet Kalidasa (c. 5th cent.) singled out four principal goals of art: to arouse the admiration of the gods; to create images borrowing the material from the world around the artist and the life of man; to be a source of many sublime joys through aesthetic sensations (rasas): the comic, love, compassion, fear, horror, etc.; to be a source of everyone's pleasure, joy, happiness, and all beauty. Quoting this excerpt, the contemporary Indian scholar V. Bahadur noted that the chief purpose of art is to ennoble man's inner life and that in order to inspire, purify and ennoble, art must be beautiful.

The aesthetic function of art is unique to it and can have no substitute. It develops the aesthetic tastes, abilities and needs of man, thus providing him with a means of orientation in the world; it also awakens his creative spirit and puts to use his creative potential. Perfecting man's value judgements, art teaches him to see life in images. An aesthetically advanced consciousness is able to appreciate the aesthetic significance of life's every manifestation. Nature itself becomes an object possessing aesthetic value. The Universe turns into poetry, pictures, works of art *non finita*. The artist's sense of the aesthetic importance of life helps him to get his ideas across to the audience providing

people with value judgements in their perception – of the world.

At first sight, the aesthetic function of art does not seem very important. True, art improves one's aesthetic taste. But why is that important? Does it mean that it can help one to decorate one's flat or choose the nicest dress? This it can do, of course, but the aesthetic function of art is a great deal broader. Its aim is to awaken the artist in man. By this, we do not mean that everyone would take part in amateur theatricals but that man should act in accordance with the inner measure of things, i.e. conform to the laws of the beautiful in his exploration of the world. Making a purely utilitarian article, for instance, a table or a chandelier, man is concerned with both utility, convenience and beauty. The latter is not the monopoly of art; its laws should guide man in whatever he is doing; therefore, everyone needs a sense of beauty. A character in one of Alexander Korneichuk's plays, the surgeon Platon Krechet, is also a violin player. This is not a detail introduced to "humanise" the character. A surgeon's hand must be just as strong, dexterous, trained, sensitive and musical as a violinist's. "Musical" fingers are a detail and an image which makes it possible to link the character of Platon to his life job.

Discussing the significance of art for man's inner life and for the process of scientific research, Albert Einstein said that works of art gave him delight. He derived from them more intellectual enjoyment than from anything else. He insisted that Dostoyevsky meant much more to him than any scientist.

The aesthetic function of art – to awaken a creator in man who likes and is able to make things according to the laws of the beautiful will gain in importance with the advance of society. The man of the future will have no direct economic or non-economic inducement to work but will be motivated solely by the need to create. And that is precisely what art develops.

The Hedonistic Function of Art (Art as Enjoyment)

By giving people access to the artist's work, art becomes a source of delight. Ancient Greeks noticed the unique character of aesthetic delight distinguishing it from carnal pleasures. It is spiritual delight which accompanies and highlights all the other functions of art. The hedonistic function of art has a number of aspects and roots in a work of art, all of which are a source of pleasure which a person experiences when in the presence of a work of art.

First, there is the free mastery of the artist over the complicated and varied material provided by life. Art is always a realm of freedom, in which the artist

owns all the infinite riches of the world, and this delights us and excites our admiration by the miracle of creative exploration of the world.

Second, no matter what the artist deals with, he has humanity in his mind's eye, i.e. reveals the aesthetic value of all things.

Thirdly, there is the harmony of form and content, and the necessary perfection of form.

Fourthly, there is harmony of the world, the artistic reality, conjured up in accordance with the laws of beauty.

Fifthly, there is the delight brought by the access to creativity and bursts of inspiration, which makes one think and feel like the artist himself.

And finally, there is the side of art as a game. It would be a mistake to reduce art to play, but one cannot fail to notice that it models human activity in the form of a game which does not pursue any practical purpose. The play of man's free forces, which is yet another manifestation of his freedom in art, also affords aesthetic pleasure. Art is valuable precisely in that it communicates the truth of life becoming a source of the sublime joy which appreciation of beauty gives. The hedonistic function of art is to delight the audience asserting the absolute value of human personality.

The Unity of the Object and the Goals of Art

It is absolutely impossible to find a range of real phenomena which could not become an object of art. Neither nature, nor society, nor man's inner life are beyond it. When Pushkin's Prophet felt the artist stirring in him, he perceived all around him:

*There came to me the gentle flutter
Of angels' wings; I heard the vine
Push through the earth and skyward climb,
The deep-sea monsters in the water
Like tiny fishes glide...*

It would be in vain to look for areas which alone afford material for art. The whole world is the object not only of scientific but of artistic exploration as well. In both, the role of practice cannot be overestimated. It is practice that determines just what man wants from the object or phenomenon he deals with. Man invariably proceeds from certain practical needs: if he is thirsty, he uses a glass for drinking out of; if a geometrical problem has to be explained which features a cylinder, the same glass can be used as an aid. In the process

of cognition, practice makes sure that the required aspect of the object is presented. One cannot act arbitrarily, for instance, smelt steel in a glass. But, guided by the object's innate properties, one will be able to examine and use this object. And if even a glass can present quite a few aspects, what a wealth of variety and meaning the world around us must contain!

When entering into a relationship with the world, the artist and the scholar are prompted by different motives. The former proceeds from his goal, which shapes his point of view and his special, artistic vision of things.

What is it then that motivates the artist to establish a link with the world around him? What is the purpose of art?

Art exists for the people, and its sublime goal is *humanism, and the happiness and meaningful existence of the individual*. But this is, so to speak, the general goal of art. Considered analytically, art is polyfunctional: it cognises, educates, foretells the future and appeals to man's emotions by the magic of word, colour, sound and shape which sometimes have a hypnotising effect upon the recipient; art is also information, communication, a source of delight, etc. It is social practice which determines the manifold purpose of art.

The fact that art is polyfunctional tells a great deal about its nature. But to grasp its very *essence*, it is necessary to single out art's *most general* purpose which would unite all its numerous functions. Let us go back to the example with the glass. This object can serve various practical purposes, but originally it is an instrument of drinking. Art has many functions, but essentially its goal is to *enhance the individual's social awareness and assert his absolute value*. Art makes the individual a truly humane and social being involving his most intimate and personal sides into the realm of social life. Directly but unobtrusively, art affects the individual's approach to the world.

Having theoretically defined the specific and most general function of art, it is possible to distinguish between its object and subject. The object of art, science and philosophy, as well as of any consciousness, is the whole world. But each form of social consciousness has its own way of dealing with it, concentrating on certain of its relations, aspects and features. Art is no exception: the artist is concerned only with those sides, features and relations found in the world which allow him to attain his specific goal. The object of art emerges at the intersection of the objective qualities of the world with the specific practical goal of the artist. This goal makes him concentrate on those facts of life which present a general interest, i.e. which interest man not as a scientist, or a specialist, but as a human being. The object of art is life interpreted with reference to the humanitarian goal of art, life in its broadest social sense, its

aesthetic diversity, the world with reference to its significance for mankind. The characteristic features of the object and goals of art determine *the forms of cognition of the world in art* (the artistic image) and *the way of figurative thinking* (the method of art).

¹ M. Dufrenne, *Esthétique et philosophie*, Editions Klincksieck, Paris, 1967.

² Georg Wilhelm Hegel, *Ästhetik*, Band I, Aufbau-Verlag, Berlin, 1965, p.507.

³ Translated by Irina Zheleznova – Ed.

AESTHETICS: THE GNOSEOLOGY OF ART

The Science of Artistic Thinking

THE IMAGE AS A FORM OF ARTISTIC THINKING

Metaphor, Paradox, Association

The artist thinks in images. The image is a figurative metaphorical thought which characterises one phenomenon through another. The artist causes phenomena to clash producing a spark which shows life in a new light. According to Anandavardhana (9th cent. A.D.), in old Indian art, figurative thinking (dhvani) had three basic types: poetic figure (alamkara-dhvani), sense (vastu-dhvani), and mood (rasa-dhvani). Each was evolved on the basis of the laws of artistic association, i.e. discovering common features in entirely different phenomena. In the earliest works of art, the metaphorical quality of artistic thinking is probably most strikingly manifest. Objects made by Scythian craftsmen in the animalistic style present a fanciful combination of existing animal shapes, such as cats with birds' talons and beaks, or gryphons who have fishes' bodies, human faces and birds' wings. Alaskan tribes produced drawings and masks in which human and animal shapes are interwoven. One of the masks is an otter with a lifelike body and a demoniac face.

Pictures of mythological creatures, such as dragons, the goddess Nuwa, a snake with a woman's head (ancient China); Anubis, a man with a jackal's head (ancient Egypt), a centaur, a horse with a man's head (Ancient Greece), or half-man, half-deer (Lopari) can serve as an example of the image in art. Here, the artist's mentality joins the objects in such a way that each is both preserved and dissolved in another, as a result of which an unheard-of creature emerges which fancifully combines the features of its ancestors. The Egyptian sphynx is a lion-man. It is neither a lion nor a man, but a man represented through a lion and a lion represented through a man. The "lionesque" in the man and the "human" in the lion are blended in such a way that a new being appears which does not exist in nature but which helps man to comprehend both nature and his own self. The fantastic combination of man and beast reveals man's regal power and his real supremacy over the world. Logical thinking establishes a hierarchy of phenomena; the image describes one phenomenon through another drawing a parallel between two independently existing phenomena. That is the essence of artistic thinking: it is not superimposed on the object but is an organic product of a comparison

between objects and of their interaction. These features of the image are very obvious in a passage by the Roman author Aelian: "Touch a swine, and it will naturally squeal. It has neither fur nor milk, nothing but flesh. When touched, it knows at once what threatens it, for it is well aware of how it can be used by man. Tyrants behave in a similar manner: they are always filled with suspicion and are afraid of everything, since they know that, like a swine, they have to give their life away to anyone." Similar to the sphynx, the image in Aelian's passage is constructed in accordance with the principle of extended metaphor. But while the sphynx is a lion-man, Aelian's tyrant is a man-swine. A parallel drawn between two creatures which normally stand far apart has produced new knowledge showing the reader that tyranny is beastly and disgusting.

The structure of the artistic image is not always as transparent as in the case of the sphynx or the swinish tyrant. But the type of thinking remains the same in more complex images as well. For instance, Lev Tolstoy or Fyodor Dostoyevsky portrayed their characters through the reflections and shadows they cast at one another and at life, and the other way round. In *War and Peace*, Prince Andrei is depicted through his love for Natasha, his relationship with his father, the sky of Austerlitz, and a thousand things and people to whom, as he realises on his deathbed, every person is linked.

The image always brings together that which is seemingly incompatible, thus revealing hitherto unknown aspects and relations of real things.

The artist thinks in associations. To Trigorin, a character in Chekhov's play *The Seagull*, a cloud looks "like a grand piano"; a gleaming splinter of a wine bottle and a dark shadow cast by the mill-wheel provide him with all the needs to imagine a moonlit night, while the fate of a girl reminds him of that of a bird. He suggests the plot for a short story: a young girl lives on the shorelake... she loves the lake like a seagull, and is happy and free like a seagull. A strange man comes upon her quite by chance and ruins her life just out of boredom, in the same way as an inexperienced hunter shoots a seagull. In a certain sense the image is built here by "bringing together" phenomena which are far actually apart from one another.

Self-Development

The image in art is like a rocket which has been launched into a certain orbit and is following the prescribed trajectory. It has its own logic and develops following its inner laws which are not to be violated. The artist "launches" the

image in a certain direction, too, but having done that, he cannot interfere in its evolution without going against artistic verity. The life material on which a work of art is based acts as a guide at times leading the author to a rather unexpected finale.

Lev Tolstoy's moral principles made him take the side of Karenin, but the logic of his realistic thinking as an artist has led the author of *Anna Karenina* somewhere he did not expect to find himself. In Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, Tatiana's marriage came as a surprise to the author, another proof that the characters have their inner logic. Similarly, Emma Bovary decided to poison herself "independently" of Gustave Flaubert.

Bazarov's ideas and convictions, and the whole range of problems considered in *Fathers and Sons* were new to Turgenev. He was definitely on the "fathers'" side, but the inexorable logic of the realistic narration guided his pen, and the ideological advantage is on the "sons" side.

The characters in a work of art behave towards the author as children do towards their parent. They owe their life to them, their characters are to a great extent the result of the parents' efforts, they obey them and show them certain respect, but as soon as their character has been shaped and is strong enough, they begin to act independently, following their inner logic.

A Wealth of Meaning and Meaning Held Back

While in science and logic everything is definite and unambiguous, the meaning of a work of art can be interpreted in a number of ways, for artistic image is as rich in meaning and significance as life itself.

One of the things that make the image meaningful in diverse ways is the fact that it is not explicit. Chekhov said that the art of writing is the art of deleting. Hemingway likened a work of art to an iceberg. The bulk, the essential and the significant, remains under water, and that is what makes the reader an active party turning the very process of perception into creation.

The artist compels the reader or the spectator to think but not to invent. The recipient is offered a certain initial impetus, a certain emotional state and a programme of processing the information, but at the same time he retains his freedom of will and has enough scope for creative phantasy.

The absence of explicitness in an image which stimulates the reader's or spectator's thinking is most clearly manifested in the principle of *non finita* (absence of ending, incompleteness of a work of art). Twentieth-century artists in particular are fond of leaving their work unfinished, supplying

scanty information about the characters' future, and leaving loose ends dangling.

In a great work of art, the image always has numerous aspects and a wealth of meaning which gradually comes to the surface as centuries go by. Each epoch finds new sides to a classical image and interprets it in its own way. In the 19th century, Hamlet was regarded mostly as a deliberating intellectual, while the 20th century, in accordance with its spirit, has turned him into a fighter. A typical 20th-century interpretation of Hamlet was given by the Soviet actor Innokenty Smoktunovsky in the film directed by Grigory Kozintsev. At the price of certain simplification and curtailment of character, at the price of losses and omissions (Claudius's prayer is a case in point), Hamlet is shown as a staunch fighter against evil. The interesting thing is that both interpretations are legitimate. King Lear is another Shakespearean character who is just as complex. An infinite variety of approaches to the essence of his tragedy has been evolved. The play was regarded by some as a tragedy of treachery and filial ingratitude and reduced to a family squabble, almost a melodrama. Others maintained that King Lear's tragedy had political origin, since he was splitting his kingdom at the moment when historical necessity ruled unification.

To questions concerning the idea of *Faust* Goethe replied he was unable to formulate it. To explain it, he would have had to write the whole thing all over again. The image is a whole system of ideas. Speaking about his intent in *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway said, "I tried to make a real old man, a real boy, a real sea and a real fish and real sharks. But if I made them good and true enough, they would mean many things."

If the image in its entirety could be translated into the language of logic, art could have been supplanted by science. On the other hand, if it had been totally untranslatable, literary and art criticism and theory would have been impossible. The thing is that the image both can and cannot be translated into the language of logic. It is untranslatable since a "residue of meaning" invariably remains after any analysis. It can be translated because delving into a work of art, one can penetrate more and more layers of its inner meaning. The image corresponds to the complexity, aesthetic wealth and variety of life itself, and so the relation of critical analysis to the image is that of endless appreciation and penetration.

Individualised Generalisation. Type

The image in art is an instance of individualised generalisation, which reveals features essential for a range of phenomena in the individual and through the individual doing it in a concrete sensual form. The individual and the universal are mutually interlaced in life. The universal can exist only in the individual and through the individual. The dialectics of the universal and the individual in thinking corresponds to their dialectical unity in life.

In art, this unity is manifested not in the universal but in the individual and through it. Let us recollect a fragment of Lev Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina*. Karenin thinks of divorcing his wife and seeks legal advice. The lawyer appears sympathetic. The confidential interview takes place in a cosy study with carpeted floors. Suddenly, the lawyer sees a clothes-moth fly across the room. And, although Karenin is revealing the great tragedy of his life, the lawyer no longer follows what his visitor is saying but is intent on catching the moth, which is a menace to his carpets. A tiny detail, but a well-loaded one. It shows quite plainly that this sort of people, the upper classes, cannot be bothered with another man's problems, and that a person who is looking for support when in trouble finds neither understanding nor sympathy: property turns out to be valued more highly than man and his fate.

It would seem that lyrical poetry does not conform to the law of the unity of the universal and the individual in the image. A lyrical poem is unadulterated self-expression, so what can the universal have to do with it? Let us consider Pushkin's poem *I Loved You*, the poet's message to a woman in which he speaks of what is most personal and intimate. Everything in it is strictly individual. Only Pushkin could feel like this. So, where is the universal? The point is that the artist's personality itself is a carrier of the universal. Vissarion Belinsky said that even when writing about himself, his own ego, a great poet is concerned with the universal, i.e. with mankind, for his personality is the focus of all that is vital to humanity, and for that reason, everyone will recognise his own grief in the poet's grief, and his own soul in the soul of the poet, seeing him not only as an artist but as a human being, a brother in the family of man.

Hegel wrote: "we can describe poetic presentation as presentation *in images*, in so far as it shows us not the thing in its accidental existence, but an image in which we recognize – directly, through the external aspect itself and through its individuality, and unseparated from these – the substantial element."¹ The

artist does not declaim, his language is that of concrete sensual images. That is the point of contact between the image in art and life forms themselves, although it would be a mistake to understand this kinship literally. The language of literature, musical sound or an architectural ensemble is a form which has not, and cannot have, anything similar in nature.

In art, every character is a type and at the same time an individual, a "familiar stranger". *A type is artistic generalisation achieved through individualisation.*

The artist grasps the characteristic and the essential in each phenomenon. An old Indian parable narrates the story of blind men who wished to know what an elephant was like and began to feel it with their fingers. One got hold of the animal's leg and declared that the elephant looked like a pillar; the second felt its belly, and decided it was a barrel; the third touched its tail and said the elephant resembled a rope, and the fourth grasped its trunk and said it was a snake. However, their efforts were in vain, for they cognised not the essence of the object but its accidental features (that which *seems*). The artist who regards accidental aspects of life as typical acts like the blind man who insisted that an elephant resembled a rope only because he failed to get hold of anything but its tail. It is a precious gift of an artist to be able to separate the unimportant, the accidental, the seemingly significant from the essential and the typical in the flood of life.

Art is able to generalise and produce an all-embracing concept of the world while not departing from the concrete and sensual nature of the phenomena it deals with.

A Deeply Felt Thought, a Thought-Out Feeling

The image in art is a blend of thought and feeling, of the rational and the emotional. When even one of the components is missing, artistic thought disintegrates and art ceases to be.

The presence of emotion is historically the earliest and aesthetically the most important element of the basis of the image. Ancient Indians believed that art appeared when feelings became so acute they could be held back no longer. A legend about the author of *Ramayana* says that once Valmiki the sage was walking along a forest path. In the grass he saw two snipes calling to each other with tenderness and love. All of a sudden, a hunter appeared and killed one of the birds with an arrow. Moved by wrath, grief and compassion, Valmiki cursed the hunter, and the words which burst forth from his heart overflowing with feeling formed themselves into a couplet which has since

then become an accepted metre known as *sloka*. Later, the god Brahma enjoined Valmiki to glorify the deeds of Rama using this metre. This legend assumes that poetry was born out of explosive and expressive emotional speech.

To create an immortal masterpiece, the artist must not only present a broad panorama of life but also evolve an emotional and ideological approach to the events, which is essential for "processing" the impressions the world offers him. In this connection, it will be appropriate to recollect an episode of Benvenuto Cellini's life. Once, moulding a silver figure of a condottiere, he suddenly realised he did not have enough silver. Cellini appealed to his compatriots for help, and they started bringing to his workshop silver spoons, forks, knives and salvers, which Cellini threw into the liquid metal. When the casting was finished, the people saw a beautiful statue, an example of consummate craftsmanship. But a fork handle was sticking out of the condottiere's ear, and a piece of a spoon, out of the horse's croupe. While the townspeople were on their way with the silver cutlery, the temperature of the metal poured into the cast fell, and not all articles melted.

Similarly, when the author's feelings are not strong enough to "melt" the material supplied by life into a complete work of art, the audience will notice the bits which have not been treated, "forks" against which a recipient will stumble.

The World and the Artist's Personality: the Material Out of Which the Image is Built

The image unites the objective and the subjective. It reflects the essential aspects of life and has a great deal of objective content. At the same time, art does not expect its imagery to be taken for reality. This is what distinguishes it from religion. The image includes not only the facts treated by the artist's creative imagination but his personal attitude to what he portrays and, in a way, the whole of his personality and his life experience.

A modern computer may have "sight" and "hearing", it can even process information according to the programme it has been fed. But even the most intricate artificial brain lacks individuality. It is possible to understand the "poem" written by a computer, but it certainly is not poetry:

An Insect

*All children are small and dirty,
Iron can cut all dragons,
And all pale, blind and submissive waters are cleaned.
An insect, dumb and scorched by the heat,
Is coming out of a larva.
How does the insect get into this fur?*

This verse produced by a machine lacks the charm of poetry for it lacks the charm of individuality and offers merely a mechanical conjunction of notions and a rigid combination of phrases which do not develop a coherent thought or express a definite individual view of the world.

The role of the artist's personality is most apparent in the performing arts, like music or theatre. Each actor interprets the character in his own way thus highlighting different aspects of the play. Tommaso Salvini, the famous Othello of the 19th century, gave a romantic interpretation of the character portraying him as a credulous, pristinely naive Moor who had little idea of the niceties of Venetian etiquette. The spectators saw a splendid general with volcanic temperament but for all that a primitive natural man who was too simple-minded to grasp the ways of civilised society. Alexander Ostuzhev, the great Russian actor, saw Othello's trustfulness as a manifestation of his highly developed inner being. He clashed a harmonious and humane personality with the world of mediocrities.

Sir Laurence Olivier interpreted Othello in an antiromantic fashion. Like Salvini, he saw the Moor as a natural man unable to fit into European civilisation. But Salvini performed the part in such a way that Othello's destiny was perceived as a reproach to the refined society, while Olivier has stripped the Moor's primitive state of all romantic embellishments. Olivier's Othello is a kindly and attractive person whose undeveloped consciousness is unable to cope with any situation which is at all complicated. The very first interruption of the familiar flow of his life throws him back into savagery and chaos. This is a clash not between Othello and Iago but between the barbarous state and civilisation which is at times cruel and hypocritical and yet polished by centuries of evolution. The differences between the two have been glossed over in the course of historical development but they are still there and bring about a tragedy – that is Olivier's interpretation of the play. Each of the three actors performed the part in accordance with his own approach to life and his creative individuality.

Even in science, it is not a matter of indifference whether the research is

carried out by a talented person or a mediocrity. And yet the personality leaves a comparatively insignificant mark on the work of the scholar. The fact that the law of the conservation of energy was first discovered by Lomonosov and later by Lavoisier does matter when priority is being established, but irrespective of who was first, its substance and formula remain the same on the strength of the objective truth it reflects. Art is different in this respect. Let us imagine that, instead of suggesting to Gogol the idea of the comedy *The Inspector-General*, Pushkin had written it himself. Most probably, not only the plot but the subject and the message of the work would have resembled Gogol's, but the actual execution and the system of images would have reflected the poet's creative individuality. *Inspector* would have been a different play.

Since the author's personality is reflected in the system of images, the more brilliant the personality, the more brilliant the work. Great art is able to satisfy both the most refined taste of a connoisseur and the tastes of the general public, but this does not mean the opposite is impossible. Occasionally, a work appears which is a great success with the public, although its artistic merits leave much to be desired. Conversely, critics have been known to condemn a work, important but not easy to understand, on the basis of its being "not clear to the masses". However, if one treats the problem "the artist – the public" historically, there have been very few collisions between mass consciousness and major works of art. A realistic image always preserves the balance of the subjective and the objective; life in a work of art is lit up by the artist's ideas, feelings and ideals.

Uniqueness

The image is inimitable, its uniqueness is absolute. Even treating the same material and discussing the same subject proceeding from identical ideological positions, different artists will produce different works, each marked by the artist's individuality. The author of a masterpiece can be recognised by his style, his manner of work. Rodin said that the artist should make a copy in his heart before actually making it with his hands, and despite himself, he will be original.

Instances are known when scientific laws were discovered, quite independently, by different scholars. Leibnitz and Newton both arrived at the differential and integral calculus. It is possible to make a scientific discovery more than once, but throughout the long history of art, no two artists have

produced identical works. However, there is an exception to every rule. A curious occasion has been described by Nizami in his poem *Iskander-Nama*. Having conquered one of the Eastern countries, Alexander of Macedon had a triumphal arch built to mark the victory. Two painters were selected to decorate the interior of the arch on both sides, and a contest of sorts began between them. The arch way was divided by a curtain so that neither of the painters could see what the other was doing. It was decided that the work having been completed, the curtain would be removed, and a judgement passed as to the comparative merits of the ornaments.

When that was done, the spectators saw an amazing sight: both half-arches were covered with identical extremely fine lace ornament. The people could not believe their eyes. On Alexander's order, the curtain was put back, and the ornament on one of the walls disappeared, while on the other, the colours continued to sparkle. Thus Alexander solved the secret of the arch: one of the painters had polished the stone to such a degree that it became a mirror reflecting the ornament created by the rival.

Hegel said that a law is brought into effect through not being brought into effect. The occasion described by Nizami proves the universal regularity: the image is unique, and its uniqueness is absolute, since it is part and parcel of the unique individuality of the artist who has created it.

¹ Georg Wilhelm Hegel, *Ästhetik*, Band II, p.366.

AESTHETICS: THE GNOSEOLOGY OF ART

The Science of Artistic Thinking

THE METHOD OF ART: A MODE OF FIGURATIVE THINKING

Science, Art and the Fact

All aspects and manifestations of art, including its method, have a character all their own. The artist's approach to life and to facts differs from that on the scientist. For the latter, a deviation from facts is tantamount to falsification, while the former is free to depart from them.

When a historian insists that the execution of the *streltsy*, Peter the Great's rebellious soldiers, took place in Red Square, he is distorting the truth, since the events happened mostly on the Black Swamp. But the Russian painter Surikov, who was perfectly familiar with the details of that episode of the country's history, did just that in his *The Morning of the Streltsy Execution*.

Why? He depicted a crucial moment: in the life of Russian society when two powerful forces have clashed: Peter the Great, the builder of a strong state, and *streltsy*, peasants by birth, on whose bones this state was being built.

Surikov intentionally ignored the part played by the *boyars*, Russian hereditary aristocracy, who deceived the soldiers using them to further their own selfish ends, and showed a clash directly between the tsar and the people. The canvas shows an intricate interlacing of human destinies, a battle of characters who are poles apart socially. Progress is not absolute. The centralisation and unification of Russia is presented as both a step forward and a source of misery for the people. The painting portrays the whole gamut of emotions and creates a gallery of portraits: soldiers, a *strelets* in a clean white shirt who is being taken to the gallows and is crushed by fear, and crying peasant women. But the protagonists who draw the spectator's attention are the tsar and the wrathful and still rebellious *strelets* with a burning candle in his hand. Their eyes have met. Behind Peter, a champion of the centralised state, rises the Kremlin, which embodies the idea of autocracy and unified Russia, while behind the *strelets* and the rest of the people, a live fairy-tale soars up – St. Basil's Cathedral, which conveys much the same idea but in a popular folklore form. Having chosen Red Square as the setting, Surikov was able to create an extremely convincing picture of the clash between the idea of the strong state and popular reaction to it during Peter the Great's reign. Preferring the heart of Moscow to the Black Swamp as the scene of action, he has deviated from historical facts but not from the truth;

moreover, that deviation helped him to reveal the very essence of the events. Art approaches facts from a different position than science, and that is one of the features of the method of art which distinguishes it from the method of science.

The Method of Art: Its Nature

The method of art is one of the more recent aesthetic categories. It was introduced by Soviet art criticism in the late 1920s-early 1930s, when a number of theorists suggested that the method of philosophy be directly applied to art. But that would have amounted to simplification and disregard of the nature of art. In the course of the debate, a new term was evolved: the method of art, which has not been used by any of the aestheticians of the past. But the existence of the phenomenon itself is beyond a doubt: aesthetics has long been studying it under other names.

Aristotle wrote about three types of mimesis in art: imitation of life as it really is, of life as it is perceived and discussed by the multitude, and of life as it should be. This is nothing but a reference to different methods of creative work, although the term itself is not yet present. In the philosophical treatise *Discours de la methode* (1637) Descartes expounded the principles of rationalism, including the necessity to work out a rigid system of knowledge and of canons and rules regulating all cognition. These principles formed the basis of the method of classicism.

Emile Zola developed the experimental method in art. When Belinsky wrote about "the natural school", or Chernyshevsky about the "critical trend" in Russian literature, they could mean nothing other than method.

What is then its nature? Critics are still debating this question. Some define method as a body of artistic devices, others – as the principles of aesthetic relation of art to life, yet others – as a system of the more general ideological principles. Let us consider each definition. Method can be hardly reduced to a set of devices, since the same devices may serve very different methods. Let us take comedy. Self- and mutual exposure of comic characters, contrasts, puns and witticisms are an assortment used both by classicism and critical realism. True, each genre has its own set of devices. But this does not mean that the method of Shakespeare's comedies differs from that of his tragedies and sonnets. The same means may be employed to attain very different ideological and aesthetic goals when they are subordinated to different artistic methods.

Neither is it correct to identify method with the aesthetic relationship between art and life: the latter may be different within the boundaries of the same method. Some of the theorists of romanticism and romantic writers themselves considered art a reflection of the artist's personality; others saw it as an outlet for romantic irony (the sceptical and negative approach towards contemporary life); still others regarded it as an idealised representation of the past, a prediction of the future, or a picture of that which is desirable. And they all worked within the same artistic method – romanticism.

Alternatively, the principles of aesthetic relation to life advanced by adherents of different methods may sometimes coincide. Tieck and Novalis, the German romantic writers, advocated a substitution of real life by the poet's fantasy and recognised only that art which could see "behind the borders of the visible world". These ideas were shared by the sentimentalists. Nikolai Karamzin, an 18th-century representative of this trend in Russia, believed that poetry should concern itself with the refined and avoid down-to-earth subjects.

To support his ideas, he quoted Jean Jacques Rousseau who wrote, "That alone is beautiful which does not exist in life. So what? If like a light shadow beauty eternally escapes us, let us grasp it in our imagination, let us pursue it into the world of sweet dreams, let us deceive ourselves and those who are worthy of being deceived." And yet romanticism and sentimentalism are different methods of art, which is proved by the fact that for the former, the leading aesthetic category was the sublime, and for the latter, the touching. It would be an oversimplification to reduce the essence of method to the artist's general ideological position, his world outlook. Such an approach to art will prevent appreciation of the work of Balzac, Dostoyevsky or Picasso. The great variety of artistic methods cannot be squeezed into the boundaries set by opposing political views (reactionary or progressive) or a simplified historical approach to art (realism or anti-realism). In the study of method, it is essential to proceed from its own aesthetic character. The relationship between world outlook and method is a complex one. It would seem that the central issue here is whether in his work the artist is motivated by his world outlook or goes against it. However, if the question is stated in this way, the accent is shifted to the relationship between two ideal phenomena: world outlook and method, while the problem which should be examined is that of the relationship between method and life.

When analysing the nature of method in art, one should take into consideration the dialectics of the objective and the subjective in the process of

its emergence.

Method in art is a historically determined type of figurative thinking which is shaped mainly by three factors: the aesthetic wealth of life, the artist's world outlook conditioned by the time he lives in and his social status, and the material accumulated by philosophy and art during the previous epochs. The object of art is not reflected in creative work as if the latter were a mirror. Therefore in the long run method is the analogue of the content of art, i.e. the analogue of the object "sifted" through the artist's world outlook and creatively interpreted.

When reflected by art, the aesthetic wealth of life becomes its object. Its essential aspects are summed up and assume stable forms in figurative thinking, i.e. the method is evolved not by building artificial constructions but in the course of the creative process itself. Summarising the major aspects of art, aesthetics singles out its method presenting it as a scientific formula, and states the objective requirements the artist must meet.

The object and content of art and its method are historically flexible. A new method emerges each time the aesthetic content of life undergoes a transformation caused by social change, when a reappraisal of values takes place.

But how can the parallel existence of different methods be accounted for? A case in point is our century in which romanticism coexists with modernism and critical and socialist realisms. This situation can be explained by the fact that social practice is divided into separate layers and compartments and that different artists have different world outlooks. Artistic method emerges when the object of art is treated actively. Ideology is the bridge between the object and the method of art, between life and the artist's mentality. In other words, method repeats those features of the object of art which are discernible through the artist's world outlook and which have been included into the content of art as its essential elements. This is what produces several artistic methods within the same period.

The determinant of method is life. Mythology as a type of artistic mentality would not have suited the art of the epoch of gunpowder and the printing press. Classicism would be powerless to understand the 20th century with its wars, revolutions, nuclear physics, cybernetics, and space exploration, and unprecedentedly acute social tension. Each epoch makes its own requirements on the method of art.

Realism and Modernism: The Clash of Artistic Mentality in the 20th Century

In the 20th century, a complex and controversial trend emerged in ideology and art which has provided food for endless discussions; its name is *modernism*. It is frequently treated in an oversimplified manner as merely a fashionable trend in Western culture as if Russia did not have its own modernist art which was not just an emulation of Western examples but a product of internal social and cultural situation. Another school of thought points out, and with good reason, that there is a link between modernism in art and the processes which are under way in modern society and culture, and it maintains that the thing to do is find a political equivalent of this fact of art, as if modernism is not complex and controversial enough to include a great variety of social and political trends, from anti- to pro-fascist, from Christian or catholic to atheist, from abstractly humane to openly reactionary. Sometimes the matter is reduced to outlining the range of art trends embraced by modernism. But it includes too dissimilar phenomena, such as cubism, surrealism, and pop art, for this to be of any help.

Modernism has more than once produced major works of art which have undermined its basic principles from the inside. Besides, many important 20th-century artists have arrived at realism via modernism, including Bertolt Brecht, Paul Eluard, Louis Aragon and Vladimir Mayakovsky. All this makes it impossible to indulge in barren rejection waving away modernism as mere nonsense.

As a rule, the method of art and the trend it is linked to seek to substantiate and justify themselves theoretically. Not so modernism, which has displayed surprising theoretical light-heartedness and carelessness. Each of the schools it embraces began by publicly declaring its principles, but hardly any has made an attempt to give an overall definition of modernism and bring together the different trends within it. Pop art, for instance, is not even aware of its aesthetic kinship with surrealism – a fact which is typical of modernism. A rare attempt of modernism to analyse and define itself is the article by the Russian writer Yevgeny Zamyatin "On Literature, Revolution and Entropy" written in 1923. In it, he said, "Science and art likewise consist in projecting the world onto certain coordinates. The difference of form is merely the difference of coordinates. All realistic forms are projection onto the stationary, flat coordinates of the Euclidean world. There is no such coordinates or such a stationary and restricted world in nature, it is a convention, an abstraction, an

unreality. Therefore realism, be it 'socialist' or 'bourgeois', is unreal; projection onto speeding, curved surfaces, which is done both by new mathematics and new art, is invariably nearer to life. Realism – not primitive realism, not *realia* but *realiora*, is a shift, a distortion, a curve, the absence of objectivity. The lens of a camera is what is objective. The new form is not clear to everybody and difficult for many. The familiar and the common is of course simpler, nicer and cosier. Euclides's world is very simple, while Einstein's is very complex – and yet there is no way back to Euclides."

The author stresses the untraditional character of modernism and its opposition to realism. Indeed, modernism has torn apart the historical continuity of world culture. Another feature of modernism is its superficial dependence on modern science, an often mechanical neo-positivist transplantation of the type of mentality characteristic of mathematics or physics into art.

Modernism emerged in the late 19th century as a reaction to the failure of man to settle social conflicts and problems and realize the ideals advanced by art. The modernist type of consciousness has been produced by acute social contradictions.

Modernism is an attempt to escape from the awareness that art is impotent. Unable to influence human soul in its entirety, modernists try to at least touch it, even if they wound it with fragments of shattered art. Modernism has split the traditional artistic image choosing to regard its individual elements as absolute. For naturalism, this is the objective content of the image; for the "stream of consciousness" literature and cinema – its psychological significance; for expressionism – the emotional load it carries; for abstractionism – its colour and outline. Modernism has enhanced each of these elements isolated as a result of the split of the traditional image.

Modernist art perceives real social forces as something uncontrollable and beyond the grasp of human mind. Unable to understand the genuine sources of social processes, it has evolved the image of infernal, malicious will which blindly manipulates man.

Twentieth-century realistic art, based on integral and diversified thinking, has assimilated the achievements of historically different types of artistic consciousness, including all that is valuable in modernism, and particularly in its technique. Thus it has enhanced its intellectual content and acquired psychological insight, expressiveness and novelty of form.

The dominant feature of *modernism* is fragmentation, it is split and disrupted thinking aiming at absolute objectivity (naturalism) or absolute subjectivity

(surrealism, abstract art, etc.) *Romanticism* is a harmonious world outlook whose features are the emphasis on the aesthetic ideal and subjectivism seen in the light of this ideal. *Realism* is also a well-rounded world outlook, but its goal is to understand life and its major social processes as they are; realism interprets life from the angle of the humanitarian aesthetic ideals.

It is inadmissible to infinitely extend the boundaries of realism counting, for instance, Kafka as a realist on the strength of the fact that he wrote about the alienation and everyone's personal responsibility for it. The problem of alienation – one of the most acute ones in the 20th century, was indeed treated in Kafka's work. But realism as a method implies not only that which has been depicted by the artist but also his *approach* to the material, his *concept* of life. Besides the subject, two other major components of art are the way the subject is dealt with and poetics. In the case of Kafka, the last two elements are not realistic. His work is permeated with the feeling of global and boundless hostility of the world towards the personality, his poetics brings together the logical and the illogical, the real and the unreal; his consciousness has a dreamlike quality: fantastical metamorphoses are intertwined with ordinary happenings, and the author considers this perfectly natural. True, Kafka's dreams at times border on reality, but that is not a sign of realism but a universal quality of human mentality. Kafka's work can be ranked as expressionistic.

Such authors as William Faulkner, Thomas Mann, Ernest Hemingway and Bertolt Brecht have extended the established boundaries of realism. Each major work must necessarily contribute to it. For this reason, it is all the more important to work out a theoretical definition which would embrace the aesthetic diversity of realism and at the same time keep it within certain boundaries. Not everyone who is not a solipsist, who admits that the world contains more than just his ego, can claim to be an adherent of realism. Extending the boundaries of this method, it is all too easy to narrow down the boundaries of art.

There is no need to "elevate" Pablo Picasso to the rank of a realist in order to recognise his genius. The same refers to the Russian symbolist Mikhail Vrubel, or Lord Byron, who was a romantic poet. In matters of art, no table of ranks exists. Jean Jacques Rousseau or Pierre Corneille do not lose in importance due to the first being a sentimentalist, and the second, a classicist. As a rule, a sentimentalist or classicist image is the embodiment of just one aesthetic quality: Karamzin's Liza is touching; Moliere's Tartufe is comically hypocritical. A realistic image has many facets, and is much richer

aesthetically. Portraying Grigory Melekhov, the principal character of the novel *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Mikhail Sholokhov has shown his frantic search for his way in life, his more elevated moments, the beauty of his love for Aksinya, his base activities (participation in the gang), and finally, the tragic collapse of a personality which has failed to find bearings in a complicated historical situation. Grigory is predominantly a tragic figure. Karl Marx wrote, "One and the same object is refracted differently as seen by different persons and its different aspects converted into as many different spiritual characters..."¹

At any given moment, man is both free and dependent on the circumstances. The latter shape human personality, but the personality also exerts an influence on the circumstances, and realistic art has grasped and reproduced these dialectics. An artist who works within realism may at times depart from a straightforward account in order to convey the complex and controversial nature of life. "I have my own view of reality (in art)," – wrote Dostoyevsky, – "that which the majority calls almost fantastical and exceptional, for me at times amounts to the very essence of existence. In my opinion, ordinariness of things and a trite view of them are not yet realism, they are probably even its opposite".

A major achievement of realism was the discovery of the people as a social force, which has considerably expanded the realm of social life embraced by art. Realism reflects life through aesthetically loaded and well-rounded images. Twentieth-century art has enhanced the role of the intellectual, philosophical element in it. Realism has developed an important quality – the psychological approach, which has given it an insight into the utmost depths of human soul and made apparent the relative independence of the individual's inner life. This discovery has contributed to the knowledge of man, made it possible to understand the dialectics of his soul, and to grasp and convey through art the evolution of human consciousness in the process of its complicated and at times indirect interaction with life.

Realistic art has worked out a succinct technique allowing it to portray life in the infinite diversity of its manifestations.

Twentieth-century realism is trying to foresee the trends of the development of man and mankind. Critical realism has become the basis for socialist realism. The notion itself emerged in the course of discussions and theoretical research which went on in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s-early 1930s.

Among the names suggested were "proletarian realism" (Fyodor Gladkov, Yuri Libedinsky), "tendentious realism" (Vladimir Mayakovsky),

"monumental realism" (Alexei Tolstoy), "realism filled with socialist content" (Vladimir Stavsky), "revolutionary and socialist realism" (Ivan Kulik) and, finally, "socialist realism" (the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* – Literary Newspaper – editorial, May 29, 1932).

Socialist realism has enriched art with awareness of the historic meaning of events which does not amount to merely a historically accurate depiction of life. Thus, Sergei Eisenstein's film *The Battleship "Potyomkin"* has a more optimistic end than the event itself did. In real life, the insurgent sailors were suppressed, while the film's finale shows the battleship going unharmed through the squadron sent to crush the rebellion. But one may say that Eisenstein decided on such ending with historical perspective in his mind's eye: the very fact of an uprising in the navy meant a step towards victory.

Another example. Bertolt Brecht has set many of his plays with no reference to a definite place or time. He himself stated that the events of *Der Gute Mensch von Sezuan* could have taken place wherever there is exploitation of man by man. Brecht frequently refused to be historically explicit. And yet his work is realistic, and his unerring judgement of the condition of modern world makes it historically accurate. What matters is that the artist's way of thinking marks him as a representative of a definite historic period no matter whether he writes fairy tales, romantic novels or science fiction.

Socialist realism frequently has a romantic element, a dream which goes ahead of the natural flow of events but is tied up with life and facilitates its understanding. Romance is an imaginative form of historic prevision, a sign that the artist possesses a sense of change and has grasped the trend of social development. Thanks to its romantic quality, the artist's mentality brings together "the three realities", as Maxim Gorky put it: the past, the present and the future.

The method of socialist realism is a mode of historically aware imaginative thinking which corresponds to the aesthetic wealth of the present and the experience of life of Soviet society, and which has assimilated the traditions of the classical art of the past. A feature of socialist realism is the optimistic artistic concept of the progress of life and the heroic concept of personality.

The characters it has created are active participants in life with no tolerance of evil. Even in the works where a hero of this type is not portrayed, his presence and his point of view always make themselves felt. The reader perceives him either as the implied positive hero, as in Alexander Tvardovsky's poem *Horizon Beyond Horizon*, or as the aesthetic ideal which opposed the base features of the negative character, as in Maxim Gorky's *The Life of Klim Samgin*.

An important quality of the method of socialist realism is its approach to the people not only as the object but also as the subject and creator of history and the master of its destiny. Art should not show a person outside the activity he is engaged in, but neither should it turn into a supplement to technology. Art is concerned with human beings, its object is to trace every manifestation of human spirit, man's every link with life.

The play *Lyubov Yarovaya* by Konstantin Trenyov, *The Man With a Gun* by Nikolai Pogodin, or the film *Chapayev* show that man is tied both to his environment and to his people. In the crucial periods of the country's history, the role of the people as the decisive historical force becomes apparent. It is these stormy epochs which usually provide material for socialist realism. Suffice it to recollect *And Quiet Flows the Don* by Mikhail Sholokhov, *The Mounted Army* by Isaac Babel, or the painting *February 27, 1917* by Boris Kustodiev.

Artists of the past have often longed for a friendly audience. At present, the people have turned from a distant addressee who may get access to a canvas or a poem several centuries later into a contemporary who lives in the same town and the same street. This cannot but affect the artist's approach to life, changing the very social and artistic basis of his consciousness.

¹ Karl Marx, "Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 113.

AESTHETICS: THE ONTOLOGY OF ART

The Branch of Knowledge that Deals with the Social Being of Culture

A WORK OF ART AS A FORM OF THE EXISTENCE OF ART

A Work of Art: Its Inner Structure

A work of art is a form of the existence of art, a system of artistic images which add up to a single whole. This is the sphere of the ontology of art. As the most valuable product of the brain, the highest form of matter, a work of art is probably the most complex thing in the world. It is a miniature universe which reflects the material universe, a model of the personality and its environment, a reflection of life on earth, the life of the spirit, of the cosmos and of everyday life. A work of art equates the universe in complexity. As a model of the world, a model of man's inner life and of society, a work of art comprises moral, political, philosophical, religious and scientific ideas, notions and problems. This alone makes it more complex than any other cultural phenomenon. Besides, behind a written text, for instance, stand the life of the epoch which has produced it, the life of the recipient's epoch, the author's personality, that which he wished to convey and that which has actually been conveyed, and the meaning of passages which are not immediately clear. Another proof of the complexity of a work of art is its historical mobility, Mobility of reception, its dependence on the epoch, the audience, the personality of the recipient and his capacity for reception at every given time determined the ontology of the work of art, its social being and functioning. The receptional mobility of a work of art, its life in the receptional field and the fact that a work of art is not a means of communication but a way of communicating, the presence of feedback distinguish it from all other cultural phenomena. All this makes a work of art extremely difficult to analyse and understand, and that is the reason why the methodology of art criticism is so complicated.

Remaining itself, a work of art changes historically as it enters into a relationship with the new experience of life and art, and acquires new features in the process. Each generation sees it with "a fresh and contemporary eye". The perception of a work of art is a dialogue of sorts between the author and the reader, the spectator or listener, who proceed from their individual mental attitudes. This accounts for the difference in the interpretation of the same work and demonstrates its historical mobility. Great works of art are our companions and contemporaries for all time to come.

But what are the ways of historical evolution of a work of art?

What is the force that motivates it? Is it the difference in individual perception? But in relation to a work of art this is an external factor and as such, it needs to lean on that inner quality of the work which gives it its historical mobility and capacity for evolution. Masterpieces develop alongside mankind. Their historical changeability is rooted in the inner controversy of art itself, in the tension of its overall structure. What is this controversy?

1. A work of art is at once material and spiritual. It is a material object which is able to reveal its spiritual and artistic qualities in culture and exert considerable social influence.

2. A work of art is subordinated to a moral principle, and at the same time it is an object of reason.

3. A work of art is both individual and social: it gives the artist a chance to express himself, deals with social problems, and reflects collective psychology and ideology.

4. A work of art blends ideas and plastic images which produce art. The concept of the world presented by it comprises an ideological and emotional system and a plastic picture of the world.

5. A work of art is a blend of the ideal and the real, its language belongs, on the one hand, to the imaginary world, and on the other, to material objects.

6. A work of art is an integrated system of images. The latter are a controversial unity of the rational and the emotional, the objective and the subjective, the conscious and the subconscious, the individual and the general.

A work of art is a unity of meaning and value. It reflects the world in all the complexity of the relationship between the world and the individual and the former's aesthetic wealth, i.e. the relation of the world to man seen from the point of view of its value for mankind. The controversial qualities which determine the nature of a work of art affect the methodology of its analysis. Thus, the unity of meaning and value requires a unity of interpretation and evaluation in the course of the study.

The artist's world outlook and life itself are indisputably the two factors which shape the concept of the world presented by works of art, and yet this concept is to a certain degree autonomous. This becomes apparent when the concept of the world which reflects the artist's mental attitudes goes beyond their boundaries and overcomes their limitations. The autonomy of a work of art with respect to life can be explained by the highly important role of the artist's creative imagination, and with respect to ideology, by the features of

the artist's concept of life which have already been mentioned: the combination of a system of ideas (the ideological and emotional element) and a system of plastic representation of life (the concrete and sensuous element). The latter as it were creates artistic reality which is unplanned, accidental, spontaneous and independently active, i.e. at first sight has the features of reality itself, the status of a real fact of life. However, this is only an illusion. And yet reproduction of life gives the material certain power over the artist, and at times produces a supremacy of the objective over the subjective, i.e. a discrepancy between the artist's idea and the execution, purpose and result. A philosophical idea enters a work of art as one of the elements determining the artist's concept of life but not equivalent to it. The same philosophical idea can be traced in different works of art, but the artist's concept of life is always *unique* and at the same time has *more than one level*, and can be conveyed both directly through ideas and through a life-like system of plastic images. A work of art is rooted in life interpreted in the light of culture as a whole: philosophy, politics, morals, and science. But art is not a repetition in a different form of the ideas of these branches of knowledge.

The structure of a work of art is able to include both these ideas and the aesthetic wealth of the world conveyed through imagery. The scope of a work of art is incomparably broader than that of any other phenomenon of culture. Politics concentrates on relations between classes, philosophy – on the relationship between thinking and being, morals – on relations between individuals and between the individual and society, while art embraces the whole system of relations between man and the world, the attitude of the individual towards himself, other people, society, mankind, nature, material and spiritual culture, and the Universe. These relations have more meaning and are more complex than any system of the most profound ideas. A true artist remains faithful to the truth. When a speculative scheme clashes with the complexity of man's relations with the world, the artist cannot depart from the true meaning of these relations and rejects the scheme. That is the essence of the victory of realism over the limitations of the artist's world outlook. Each art trend produces its own model of the world which is represented in a type of an art work. This model is matched by a certain hierarchy of levels which form the structure of this work, with each level expressing a type of the relationship between man and his different inner and outer environments.

Level one ("I" – "I") – the individual's autocommunication, his interaction with his own self, the realm of artistic analysis of the individual. This level shows

that man is aware of himself as a personality and depicts the conflicts of the conscious with the subconscious. It reproduces the "dialectics of the soul", "the stream of consciousness" and embraces the philosophical and psychological problems tackled by the work of art.

Level two ("I" - "you") - the individual's communication with another individual, an analysis of personal relationships. This level deals with moral and ethical problems.

Level three ("I" - "we") - the individual's social relationships, an analysis of his social being and his interaction with the social environment, his nation, people, society and the state. This is the realm of social and political issues.

Level four ("I" - "everybody") - the individual's relationship with mankind and its history. This level deals with philosophical and historical problems.

Level five ("I" - "everything") - the individual's relationship with the natural environment. Embraces problems of natural philosophy and the philosophical aspects of ecology.

Level six ("I" - "the other everything"; "I" - "everything we have created") - the individual's relationship with material culture, the hand-made "second nature". Embraces the philosophical problems of urbanisation, as well as creative and aesthetic issues.

Level seven ("I" - "the third everything") - the relationship between the individual and culture. Embraces general cultural problems.

Level eight ("I" - "and all the rest") - man and the Universe. Embraces the philosophical-metaphysical problems of the meaning and purpose of life.

All types of human activity modelled by art and all types of relations between man and the world are treated by art in their aesthetic sense, in the light of their relationship with mankind. This is what accounts for the humanitarian character of art and reveals the essence of its aesthetic nature.

The artist's concept of the world is shaped by a great number of factors, including the dominant level, the absence of certain levels, the hierarchical sequence of the levels following the dominant one, the way each level is interpreted, the political, philosophical and moral ideas to be found in the artist's concept alongside the plastic model of the world.

The type of the artistic and conceptual structure of a work of art points to the trend it belongs to. The structure may vary in different works produced by the given trend but basically it remains the same.

The Topical and the Eternal in a Work of Art

A work of art has many layers, and one of them is its political existence, its participation in the ideological battles of the epoch (suffice it to recollect Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman* or Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*). It is this layer which determines the topicality of a work of art, its ability to meet the requirements of the day, and it decreases or disappears altogether when the political situation is changed, so that very often the subsequent generations are hardly aware that it in fact deals with very real political issues. Terrorism, the topical layer of Dostoyevsky's novel *The Devils*, may at some future point become either up-to-date again or seem utterly insignificant. In a new historical situation, a work of art may be revived if new points of contact with life have been discovered in it. The topical in a work of art appeals to a given society, while the in-depth layer in it appeals to all mankind and gives a work of art its everlasting value, for taken as a whole it is not only a response to an acute contemporary problem but is meant to have a long or even eternal life. The topical political layer is limited by the brevity of its appeal, but it is nevertheless an essential one, for the system of moral and political ideas advanced by the artist gives an insight into his social position. To a certain extent it shapes appreciation of all the other aspects and elements of a work of art, and may sometimes even affect the appraisal of its in-depth (aesthetic) layer. The Russian poet Fyodor Tyutchev was very little valued by his contemporaries owing to the obscurity of his verse. In 1856, Nikolai Nekrasov referred to Tyutchev as a second-rate baroque poet. It was many years later that he emerged as a major figure in Russian literature, which can be explained by the fact that he placed very little importance on the topical and the social in art, i.e. those elements which have the most direct appeal for contemporary audiences. The purpose of the in-depth (aesthetic) layer is to retain its appeal for posterity. A work of art is a receptacle of both the present, of mankind's memories of its past and a prediction of the future. The artist appeals to his social environment, to his contemporaries, to those who are near and to those who are far away, to all humanity. He seeks to influence contemporary relations, oversteps the boundaries of his time, introduces his experience into the future and measures his time by the standards of intransient human values. The latter include both the eternal aesthetic criteria, i.e. good and evil, and the universal aesthetic values, i.e. the beautiful and the ugly. The importance of a work of art is subject to change due to the lack of stability of its functions. However, this mobility has nothing to do with

relativity: a work of art is changeable, but it always remains itself and preserves its *ideological and aesthetic character*.

The principal function of Pushkin's novel in verse *Eugene Onegin* today is not the same as it used to be in the 19th century. The political ideas of the Decembrists have long ceased to be topical. But the political aspect of the work is still there even if it has a different impact on the readers. Another side of *Eugene Onegin* has come to the fore; it is now perceived as a panorama of Russian spiritual life in the early 19th century. The political theme of Decembrists has grown into a historical and cultural one. At the same time, this "shift" gives the readers of later periods an idea of the historical topicality of the novel and of the importance of the political ideas it treats for the epoch which produced them. This enhances the emotional impact of the novel by creating the figure of the poet who "dared to speak the truth before the tsars and did it with a smile", and although this truth no longer corresponds to the ideas of the modern reader, he cannot but admire the poet's courage and gallantry.

A work of art is a whole world which is both relatively independent and complete; it is the world of the spirit which is by no means inferior to the real one in complexity and scope.

Verity and Verisimilitude

Artistic verity and the ability to convey it with skill have been highly valued ever since the time of the first art critics.

The ancient Egyptian architect Mertissen who lived in the period of Mentuhotep III wrote on the tombstone which he provided for himself during his life time, "I was an artist skilled in my art, surpassing everyone in the knowledge I possessed.... I knew how to convey the movements of a human figure, the walk of a woman, the pose of a soldier brandishing his sword and of a soldier defeated... the expression of terror on the face of a man who has been caught sleeping, the position of the arm of a man who is throwing a javelin and the bent position of a running man. I could do inlaid work which fire did not burn or water wash away".

Artistic verity is a major rule of art. It is not equivalent to verisimilitude, for it is not mere lifelikeness. A legend is known about an artist who could paint flowers so well that his work deceived not only people but also the bees who landed on the canvas and tried to gather nectar. Well, if art deceives bees, that is not so bad; but it is much worse if people are taken in: such art is nothing

but sham reality.

The most convincing arguments in favour of a distinction between verity and verisimilitude have been advanced in a dialogue written by Goethe.

"*Spectator*: Do you say that only an ignoramus can take a work of art for a work of nature?

"*Defence*: Of course. Think of the birds which gathered around the cherries painted by a great artist.

"*Spectator*: Does this not prove that they were brilliantly done?

"*Defence*: Not at all, it proves rather that the connoisseurs were veritable sparrows."

The defence proceeds to tell a story of a great naturalist who had a monkey.

Once he found it in his library where it was trying to eat the bugs reproduced on illustrations.

"*Defence*: Would you mention those coloured pictures in the same breath with the works of a great master?

"*Spectator*: Hardly!

"*Defence*: And would you count the monkey as another ignoramus?

"*Spectator*: Yes, and a greedy one at that. But what a curious idea you've given me! Doesn't an ignorant spectator or reader demand verisimilitude from a work of art to be able to enjoy it in his own, often crude and vulgar way?

"*Defence*: I couldn't agree with you more".

From the position of verisimilitude, the ceiling in Vassily Surikov's painting *Menshikov in Beryozov* is impossibly low, but it is this detail that has made it possible for Surikov to convey the stilling atmosphere of exile and the hero's state of mind.

Verisimilitude is not the goal of art; as Hemingway wrote, art seeks to "make something really true and something truer than true". Truth in art is not tantamount to lifelikeness. Isaac Babel very justly said that a well-devised story does not need to bear a resemblance to life: life itself does its best to seem a well-devised story. Aristotle placed the poet above the historian, since the historian speaks only of that which actually happened, i.e. both the essential and the accidental, while the poet clears history of everything accidental. The events the historian describes are real. Art is not a copy of life but its most probable variant. Poetic narration contains facts processed by thought. This concept expounded by Aristotle has in its essentials found support in cybernetics. All of a sudden, the cognitive function of art has assumed a precise mathematical form. Norbert Wiener, the father of cybernetics, wrote, "In fact it is possible to interpret the information carried by

a message as essentially the negative of its entropy, and the negative logarithm of its probability. That is, the more probable the message, the less information it gives. Cliches, for example, are less illuminating than great poems."¹

The probability of truth in art always contains an element of surprise. A work of art in which everything is predictable and known in advance is a cliché, a trite worn-out half-truth and not artistic verity.

A gripping plot is only a superficial manifestation of how important unexpected probability is for verity in art. In Pushkin's drama *A Feast During the Plague* two women are present at the feast; one is fragile and weak, while the other's manner of speaking seems to indicate that she has a man's heart in her chest. And yet at the sight of a horrible cart carrying corpses it is the second woman who faints. Cruelty is weaker than tenderness and fear lives in the soul tormented by passions – that was Pushkin's idea. The truth in art is paradoxical and unexpected, and for that reason loaded with information. It is always surprising. Art penetrates covers, reveals the hidden, and rejects the hackneyed – that is why it is full of brilliant absurdities, expected surprises, paradoxes and magic.

¹ Norbert Wiener, *The Human Use of Human Beings. Cybernetics and Society*, London, 1954, p. 21.

AESTHETICS: THE ONTOLOGY OF ART
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STYLE IN ART

Style as a Category of the Ontology of Art

The concept of style has many aspects and is used by different sciences, including literary criticism, art criticism, linguistics, the history of culture and aesthetics. The broader the interpretation of this concept, which now can be applied to clothes, fashion, behaviour, play, work, management, thinking and way of life, the broader its meaning as an element of culture. Style becomes the *quality of a certain culture* which distinguishes it from any other culture, a *constructive principle of the formation of culture*. Acquiring cultural value, an object also acquires a certain style, which says that it belongs to a certain social and historical segment of a certain culture. An object's style is not only its appearance but, first and foremost, an indicator of its material and spiritual function within a given culture; in other words, style reveals *the functional* characteristics of an object or phenomenon.

The approach to style as a quality of culture has proved a fruitful one and is used both by aesthetics and literary and art criticism. The goal of a work of art – to affect the recipient in a certain way – lies beyond the boundaries of art. But by virtue of the principle of feedback, this goal influences the whole process of creating a stylistically expressive work and its future functioning. Art criticism interprets style *as limited multitude of elements which are stable, qualitatively definite and expressive*.

Style in art is neither form, nor content, nor even their unity. Attempts to define style through these categories have been fruitless. Style relates to form, content and their unity as the "form" and "content" of a living organism relate to a set of genes in its cell. The genes determine the organisation of a given being, its characteristics as an individual and a member of a certain family and species, and its type as a whole. Style is "the set of genes" which determines the type of culture. It is a representative of the whole in each "cell" of a work of art. Subordinating every detail to the overall constructive intent, style determines the structure of the work of art and its place in a culture. The selectivity of style is both spiritually and historically conditioned. Style is the tendency of all the elements in a work of art towards its centre, the centrifugal force which unites them in a single whole. Style "centralises" a work of art and becomes the pivot of the creative process. Style determines *the*

most general features of a work of art and the basic principle of the organisation of the artist's world.

The Functional Diversity of Style

What are the functions of style? The very understanding of the social and aesthetic nature of this phenomenon depends on the answer of this question.

1. Style is *a factor of the creative process* which unites it, gives it direction and provides the artist with landmarks to be guided by when evolving his world outlook. Style makes sure that the varied impressions of life fall into a harmonious system, thus allowing the artist to avoid the trap of eclecticism.
2. Style is *a factor of the evolution of art* which helps the artist to find his place in the art of his time. It ensures continuity of tradition and makes possible the cultural interrelation of different epochs without disrupting the structure of a work of art, which corresponds to the personality of the artist and to his time.
3. Style is *a factor of the social being of a work of art*, i.e. the factor which points to the artist's social views. Thanks to style, a work of art acquires completeness and begins to exist as an independent social phenomenon.
4. Style is *a factor of the influence exerted by a work of art*. It determines the nature of the aesthetic effect it has on the audience making the artist address his work to a certain section of the public, and the public, to accept a certain type of art.

The channels through which style operates show that it is selective towards the material provided by life, cultural tradition, social goals, and the public. Style is the carrier of the immediate influence of art on human consciousness. The meaning and concept of a work of art appeal to the reason, and the system of images – to the mind and feelings of the recipient. Style gives an idea of the quality of a work of art as a whole through a single momentary spurt of information which contains no details. Having formed an idea as to the style of a work, the reader or spectator is frequently able to say a good deal about it, even whether it is worth finishing, although he may have read through the first stanza of a poem or seen the first act of a play only.

Here, we come up against *the informative aspect of style*, with its role as the focus of artistic communication which gathers all the threads connecting the artist with the audience through his work. At this point, the creation of a work of art becomes its existence and later, perception.

Working on a book, the writer has the reader in his mind's eye. The latter looms behind the process of creation as the goal for which the artist is

working. In his turn, the writer is always present in the reader's consciousness. The charm of the artist's name, the attraction of his fame, the authority of his taste, his professional status established by literary criticism and accepted by public opinion, the reader's familiarity with the writer's earlier works, which reflect his personality – all this constitutes both the psychological background of perception, its incentive, and the motive behind the intellectual process as a whole. In other words, the writer and the reader will meet only if both intend to do so, if each sees the other as the goal, if the desire to attain intellectual and spiritual union is mutual. Style is the point where their wishes come together, their meeting-ground. It is through style that the writer passes on proof of his authority and the stamp of his personality which is manifest in every single element of his work down to the individual phrase with its structure, rhythm and intonation. Style allows the audience to recognise its favourites and feel their proximity to its collective frame of mind.

Style builds (or interrupts) the chain life – artist – work of art – executor – recipient – life, with life being both the beginning and the end: it provides the artist with material and it is changed by the public under the influence of a work of art. In this sense, style affects culture as a whole.

Style reflects the character, direction and degree of man's aesthetic mastery over the world and is also *the carrier of aesthetic value*, since aesthetic exploration of the world is prompted not by the needs of consumption but by man's intellectual needs. The meaning and value of art become united in style. Style is a source of enjoyment derived both from grasping the general message of the work of art and from endless penetration into its in-depth layers.

The enjoyment of art begins when the recipient forgets about its conditional nature, draws a parallel between art and life, and recognises the real in the figurative. Art for the elite deliberately complicates recognition seeking to afford maximum pleasure to a minimum number of connoisseurs. But such works run the risk of remaining completely obscure or even losing all meaning. In the art which belongs to the so-called mass culture on the other hand, symbolic representation is almost absent; as a result, it requires hardly any intellectual effort to be understood. It is accessible to all but is not very informative aesthetically; owing to the ease with which reality can be perceived through the figurative, it gives minimum pleasure to the maximum number of ill-prepared recipients. Only the golden mean: the balance between lucidity and obscurity, a combination of clarity with the difficul-to-grasp

"residue of meaning", easy recognition of reality through the figurative but not their coincidence, a blend of familiarity and novelty produce a truly valuable work of art and form a style which does not fade with time and does not oppose the general public to the connoisseurs but makes a connoisseur out of everyone. This disposes of the fatal contradiction of art – that between art for the elite and art for the masses.

The Structure of Style

Style, be it the style of an individual work of art or culture as a whole, is a *complex* structure which has *many levels*. It reflects the author's integral personality, his intent, the characteristic features of the trend the artist represents, and the entire cultural heritage which has formed the basis of his work.

The deepest, "generative" level of style is that aspect of it which is known as the original phenomenon of culture. It makes it possible to trace the emergence and being of style both in the history of culture and in the creation and existence of an individual work of art.

The first thing to appear when a poem is written is rhythmically organised intonation which conveys the poet's emotional state and reflects the value-aesthetic relationship between the process of creation and the theme. After that, the whole is given verbal form. In other words, the "generative" level is the level of *theme* and *intonation*, and the generated level is that of *meaning* and *value*. Similarly, the first products of culture *were united by theme and intonation*, which was determined by the common history of the peoples and the similarity of their historical experience; later, they affected *the art of a given region both as concerns its meaning and the values it upheld*.

This first stylistic level embraces, for instance, all phenomena of Indo-European art.

The second stylistic level comprises *the national stylistic features* of a culture. Here, the regional style (a single store of themes, intonation and rhythm) acquires a concrete quality resting as it does on the cultural experience of a given nation in history. A national style is easy to distinguish. Guided *by style*, it is possible to tell a Russian work of art from a German or a French one. A good poetic translation can preserve the national colour of the original, for the national style does not amount to the language but makes itself felt in the rhythm, intonation and theme as well.

The next level of style is *the national style of a given period* of the nation's

historical and cultural development, e.g. French classicism or Italian baroque. At this level, it is sometimes possible to single out the style of an individual art, e.g. Russian Empire-style in architecture, or even of an individual genre, e.g. the style of the Faiyum portrait. On the other hand, this level of style can be extended not only to the phenomena of art but also to culture as a whole. It is quite legitimate to speak of mediaeval culture of the comic, the penetration of the carnival into all aspects of the style of mediaeval man's activities.

A more recent level of style is *the style of each of the competing art trends*. Up to a certain point in history, art had not been split into opposing trends, which emerged eventually with the evolution of art. Within each trend an individual style has been evolved. For instance, dissimilar realistic works all have certain stylistic features which allow us to recognise the trend they belong to.

The style of a trend is changeable. It may expand to embrace landscape design, etiquette and fashions, as classicism did, or contract and become manifest only in the works of certain schools or movements included in a given trend. In this case, one may speak about yet another level of style – that of movement.

The most recent level of style historically is *the individual style of the artist*, which reflects the type of his figurative thinking. The individual style emerged as soon as man has been shaped as a personality and acquired self-awareness and individuality of tastes, principles and actions. Alexander Blok, the famous Russian poet, said that the style of each writer is so closely linked to the content of his soul that a discerning eye can see the soul through the style. In our epoch of condensed time, human life has become more capacious than ever before. The formerly stable characteristics of a mature personality, i.e. individuality, type of mentality, value orientations – can now undergo drastic changes in the course of the artist's life, as a result of which the style of his work also changes and can be described as the style of the artist's this or that period. Picasso's "blue" and "rose" periods differ stylistically, but at the same time both bear the stamp of the painter's individual style, since throughout all metamorphoses, even qualitative ones, the personality retains its kernel, and what the others see is *the same but different man*.

The tempo of the inner life of a genius may be so quick that any single work of his can have a style of its own. Every section of such work will have something of the whole linking it to the other sections, but the work in its entirety will differ stylistically from the other works by the same artist. In other words, there is also such a thing as *the style of a work of art*.

In the 20th century, yet another level of style has emerged – *the style of an*

element of a work of art. It is clearly perceptible in collage with its mosaic-like quality, especially in music and painting. Collage does not merely "quote" other works, as was the case with Bach, but mechanically assimilates incompatible fragments which are stylistically alien to each other. One of the first to explore the possibilities of collage in music was Igor Stravinsky. A polystylistic work of art is perceived as a complete one thanks to the existence of other levels of style.

A separate stylistic level is *the style of the art of different countries produced by the same epoch.* French, German and Russian classicism, for example, have common stylistic characteristics, due to, first, common features of that stage of historical development which produced similar ways of life and modes and forms of activity and, as a result, a similarity of cultures; and, second, international cultural communications, with France as their centre.

The most extensive stylistic level historically is *the style of the epoch.* It embraces the stylistic diversity of all the works of art produced by a given epoch even when they belong to stylistically opposite trends.

Style is a manifestation of culture as a whole, a visible sign of art as a system. As the complexity of this system increases, its common features become more and more obscure. Certain critics refuse to acknowledge that modern art has any common style at all considering this a feature of art at the earlier stages of its development. But even today, the style of the epoch exists which characterises modern art as a whole despite the fact that its evolution has become very complex indeed and that individual art trends, and within them, individual works, grow increasingly more dissimilar stylistically. As the most general feature uniting a multitude of individual phenomena and groups, the style of the epoch records not only the individual and inimitable but also that which makes every artist a representative of a given historical period.

In the course of the evolution of culture, the number of common features of style increased and at the same time the structure of style became more diversified and both the individual works and the process of the development of art as a whole grew more complex. In other words, a regularity of the evolution of art is *a dialectical process in the course of which the structure of individual works becomes more complex and the number of stylistic levels in it and the degree of its dissimilarity and at the same time unity with the other phenomena of culture increase.*

It is well known that man can stay apart as an individual only in society. Similar dialectics of the general and the particular is a feature of culture as well. As art progresses, individual works diverge from the principal trend

sometimes to become a genre in their own right marked by an inimitable style: recall, for example, Goethe's *Faust*, Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman* or Gogol's *Dead Souls*. At the same time, common features of style also develop: 1) the "generative" regional style; 2) the national style; 3) the style of the art created by a given nation in a given period; 4) the style of an art trend (or school or movement); 5) the individual style of an artist; 6) the style of the artist's given period; 7) the style of a work of art; 8) the style of an element of a work of art (the collage quality of style); 9) the style of the epoch, which leaves its stamp on all the style levels mentioned above.

The Life of Style in a Work of Art

Let us trace the life of style in a work of art using Pushkin's poem *The Bronze Horseman* as an example. The images of the poem are of a general philosophic, allegorical and symbolic nature.

The River Neva, which "like a charger panted from field of combat newly fled...", emerges not only as a natural but also a social force. The consequences of the flood are socially destructive. Acquiring human characteristics, the river proves a robber, a brigand, a villain. Neva is now regally calm, now rebellious. Drawing a parallel between the flood and the power of public wrath, Pushkin uses the image of the besieged Winter Palace, which looked like a "lonely isle" in the midst of the flood.

The Bronze Horseman is the person who has got astride the elements managing them with an iron hand. The horse – the Neva – state power – the people – the rebellion – all these are links in a chain of metaphors, a cascade of transferred meaning, allegorical parallels and a profound content. This short poem is a quintessence of meaning. Its shortness is not only the result of the poet's unerring sense of measure in art but a sign of its condensed meaning. Of course the flood is not identical with a popular insurrection but it does help to reveal the nature of the latter: at times, there is a likeness between the two, and at times, a direct link appears between the flood and the real people lining the banks of the river waiting for the outcome:

Stricken

*By God's unlooked-for, awful wrath,
The people wait for certain death!...*

From the allegorical point of view, it is important that the river, which Peter has imprisoned into granite, is hostile both to the Bronze Horseman, the embodiment of state power, to Yevgeny, an impoverished nobleman, and to the people whose welfare and property are irrevocably damaged.

The opening and the conflict of the poem conform absolutely to the canons of classicism: the idea of personal happiness represented by Yevgeny clashed with the idea of the statehood represented by Peter. But the outcome of the conflict is not a classicist one. Neither of the protagonists is given advantage; the poet poses the question of a balance between history and the present, personality and the statehood, happiness and legality. The concept of *The Bronze Horseman* is treated realistically: Pushkin was acutely aware that the individual and society cannot resist the pressure of history which must interfere into all the events and change them. All Russian history is concentrated in the idea of statehood, which means order and discipline. The flood symbolises historical chaos. As the embankment and the bridges built by man to curb the elements are swept away by water, so does rebellion break into statehood destroying it – after it has destroyed the private life of Yevgeny who stood up to statehood.

In *The Bronze Horseman*, Pushkin has made a veritable discovery in the realm of linguistic means, using the poetic language of the ode as the language of Aesop. The verse itself has become his defence against censorship: the poem produces a distinct impression that Pushkin extolls Peter, St. Petersburg, his creation, and the life style of his epoch. Evading the obstacles put up by the strict tsarist censorship, the language of Aesop at the same time serves a purely literary purpose, conveying irony. All these are signs of the complex, multi-tiered structure of the poem.

The form of the ode has traditionally been used to convey lofty ideas. Pushkin has broken and changed this tradition rooted in Russian 18th-century literature. The style of the ode in his poem serves not only to extoll the sublime – Peter's idea of a new capital of Russia and the stately city created by his will – but show the humdrum daily life of Yevgeny and his quest of personal happiness, and even the base and the negative, such as the tsar's wrath directed at a man who is no match for him, the Bronze Horseman's persecution of Yevgeny, and other inhuman acts of the despot. Organically ingrained in the elevated vocabulary of the poem, words borrowed from ordinary speech acquire a disguised critical force. The internal contradiction between the traditional elevated form of the ode and the content with its wealth and diversity of meaning produces an impact which has an explosive

effect: a phrase which is first perceived as expressing admiration is suddenly seen as a carrier of criticism contained both in its meaning and style. Pushkin has put the ode in the service of both extolment and exposure, a fact which testifies to the poet's professional skill, his novel approach to the material and his ability to use traditional literary technique to deal with a new set of ideological and poetic issues.

Pushkin develops the theme of Yevgeny mostly using everyday language. But when brought together by genius, ordinary words add up to great poetry:

*And so, once in his house, Yevgeny
Shook out his rain-soaked cloak, undressed
And went to bed. He tried his best
To go to sleep, but failed: too many
Thoughts filled his brain.*

However, as soon as Pushkin passes on to a description of Yevgeny's rebellion, his language changes to the elevated verse formerly used only to portray Peter: from an insignificant man who is "a clerk and in Kolomna living", Yevgeny grows into an opponent of the "wrathful" tsar and thus merits the same language as Peter himself. The man whom the tsar did not deem necessary to consider when making plans for his state and executing them suddenly becomes an object of his attention and comes to be regarded as a force which equals that of the man "who had in sway held half the world". In *The Bronze Horseman*, Pushkin managed to attain a perfect balance between the contemporary and the archaic, the humdrum and ordinary and the elevated and worthy of poetic exaltation. Style is the ruler which extends its power over each element of a work of art. Therefore, in order to grasp the style of *The Bronze Horseman*, it is sufficient to analyse just one phrase, stanza or part of the poem, in the light of the whole. Such analysis should bring to light the principle underlying the poem's style which will act, show itself and determine the progress of each part, stanza and line.

Everything in Pushkin's poem has two sides to it: St. Petersburg, the flood, Peter, and Yevgeny. St. Petersburg is both beautiful and horrible, the flood is an evil force and a free play of the elements; Peter is great as a statesman and cruel towards the individual; Yevgeny's poverty is pitiful but his love is great; his life-status is humiliating while his dreams of independence and honour elevate him; his insanity is pathetic, while his rebellion is sublime. Even his death is both undignified and highly meaningful: insane, he dies on a desert island, but this island is either the place or reminds one of the places where

people are buried whose "insanity" was of the highest order – leaders of the historically doomed Decembrists' Uprising against despotism in Russia.

Style *represents the whole in every unit of the text*, while the thing which makes the poem a single whole is the duality of all its elements. Everything in the poem is split in two, double-faced, has two ends, two sides and proves its own opposite: good and evil, baseness and sublimity, wretchedness and grandeur, insanity and reason. The style itself shows the poet's awareness of the dialectical quality of life, its great controversies, changes of one thing into another, the kinship and hostility of opposites and the hostility and kinship of that which is similar.

Another aspect of the style of *The Bronze Horseman* is its allegorical character. The text, which deals with a concrete situation, is at the same time superimposed on the three historic periods present in the poem: that of Peter – the building of St. Petersburg, of Alexander I – the flood, and of Nicholas I – the time of Pushkin. It is this superimposition that accounts for the profoundly metaphorical quality of the poem. At one end of the metaphor is the reality of art depicted by Pushkin, and at the other, the historic figures, events and problems of the three epochs which form the background for the characters and situations of the poem. All this produces that internal dynamics and the universal character of the text of *The Bronze Horseman* which allows its images to become projected onto new historic situations and figures making the poem eternally topical.

Ordinary and elevated poetic narration and extolment, criticism and admiration, the sublime and the base – all these opposites are blended in the style of *The Bronze Horseman* into a single whole. In each phrase, stanza and part of the poem, one of the opposites plays the leading role, but the other is also present, and their harmony becomes obvious only when each of the segments of the poem is seen in the light of the whole.

The poem's stylistic principles have a single root: the *dialectical* quality of the style of *The Bronze Horseman* is a tense harmony which unites the profound controversies of life and of the poet's consciousness into a harmonious poetic world built in accordance with the laws of beauty.

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ARTISTIC CREATION

Predisposition to Artistic Creation

On the mysterious process of artistic creation Kant had this to say: "All the steps which Newton had to make from the elements of geometry to his great and profound discoveries he could represent with perfect clarity not only to himself but to anyone and could pass them on to posterity; but no Homer or Wieland can show to us how ideas full of fantasy yet replete with thought emerge and combine in his head for he does not know it himself and consequently cannot teach it to anyone. So, in the scientific field the greatest inventor differs from a wretched imitator and a pupil only in degree while he differs specifically from someone whom nature has endowed with a gift of the fine arts."¹ Modern artists may be aware of certain psychological aspects of their creative work but to this day there is much about these processes that defies understanding. The Russian poet Pushkin wrote: "Every talent is inexplicable. How does a sculptor see a hidden Jupiter's head in a piece of Carrara marble and bring it to light by breaking the shell with chisel and hammer? How does it happen that thought comes out of the poet's head equipped with four rhymes and measured in clear and uniform stanzas? – So no one except the improviser himself can grasp the quick impressions, the close connection between his own inspiration and the alien external will." In considering the process of artistic creation aesthetics cannot afford to ignore its psychological aspects. The Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, the founder of "analytical psychology", noted that psychology as a science of the processes of the psyche can be linked to aesthetics. This indicates the presence of a borderline zone between these sciences to where aesthetics is called upon to contribute as the *psychology of art*.

There is a hierarchy of value ranks describing the degree of a person's predisposition to artistic creation: capable – gifted – talented – genius. The American psychologist Guilford distinguishes six *capabilities* the artist exhibits in his work: fluent thinking, analogies and juxtapositions, expressiveness, the ability to switch from one class of objects to another, adaptation flexibility or originality, and the ability to lend desired outline to artistic form.

To be artistically *gifted* means to have a sharp perception of life, to be able to

select objects for attention, to fix these impressions in memory, to extract them from memory and include them in the rich system of associations and links prompted by creative imagination. At various periods in their lives many people engage in some sort of artistic activity with varying degrees of success. But only someone with artistic capability can create artistic values of social interest. An artistically gifted person creates works that have lasting value for a given society over a considerable period in its development. *Talent* produces artistic values of intransient national and sometimes universal human relevance. A *genius* creates the highest human values relevant for all times. The measure of an artist's genius is powerful perception of the world and depth of influence on mankind.

The Psychological Mechanisms of Artistic Creation

Artistic creation begins with a particularly sensitive attitude to surrounding phenomena and presupposes "rare impressions" and an ability to keep them in memory and to assimilate them. *Memory* is an important psychological factor in artistic creation. An artist's memory is not a mirror, it is selective and creative. Marcel Proust attached exceptional significance to memory. Believing that it is memory that confers artistic shape on reality he revived the past and then set down his memories in his works.

An important element in the psychological mechanism of artistic creation is *internal release* which provides an outlet for the artist's confessional urges and his wish to share profound feelings or vivid impressions with persons close to him.

The creation of a work of art involves the subconscious, the conscious and the superconscious. The subconscious engenders in every creative process (and not only in artistic creation) a vast number of variants for the solution of a problem, together with images and mental associations between phenomena. The intuitive aesthetic sense, a sense of harmony and beauty makes one select the most beautiful solutions and images from this vast number. The mechanism of intuition is closely linked with aesthetics. Henry Poincare, the French mathematician, stressed that the distinguishing quality of the mathematical mind should be sought not in logic but in aesthetics. The same ideas have been expressed by a contemporary American mathematician, S. A. Papert.² The ideas that pass from the subconscious to the conscious are not always correct, since there are no logical criteria of truth in the subconscious. Beauty is the criterion in the transfer of ideas and images from

the subconscious to the conscious where the material (thoughts) received from the subconscious is subjected to rigorous testing. An idea born, selected and organized in the subconscious by the aesthetic sense, rises to the conscious. There it is checked out logically, clarified and processed by reason (which provides arguments, fills in missing links, validates and puts it in the cultural context which enriches it). From the conscious the ideas or images, checked logically and illuminated by reason, go to the superconscious where they are deepened and given a final theoretical-conceptual or artistic-conceptual shape. Logic is the criterion in selecting what is to be passed from the conscious to the superconscious.

The process of selecting ideas and images in passing from intuition to the conscious and from the conscious to the superconscious is not unlike the process of natural selection. Nature produces many mutation variants of a given organism whereupon natural selection identifies the more viable variants. The best adapted specimens survive, passing on their qualities to new generations through genes. Intuition, too, produces a multitude of "mutation" variants of ideas and images. First the aesthetic sense (at the intuitive level) and then rigorous logic (at the conscious level) select ideas and images from that multitude. Only the most beautiful, harmonious, coherent, logically convincing and valid of them "survive", i.e. go on for further processing in the artist's mind.

The transition from the subconscious to the conscious and to the superconscious involves a tremendous creative increment. It is not a straight or one-way process but rather a reciprocal kind of movement. The creative process proceeds from the subconscious to the conscious and then to the superconscious but the results, once they have been formed in the conscious and the superconscious, return to the subconscious. There they give rise to new ideas and images enriched by impressions of life and new creative work of intuition. These new results of creative work are marked by still greater harmony and logical coherence. The three departments of the brain that take care of the three stages of the creative process (the subconscious, the conscious and the superconscious) have then – specific languages. And the transition from one stage to the second and third, the movement back and forward again is a process of translation from one language of the brain into another. In fact translation from one language into another and back is the simplest model of the creative process. It is through such double translation that artistic thought grows. In the case of the artist this inner growth is particularly creative and effective because it involves three internal languages of the mind

in back-and-forth translation. In the creative process pauses may occur which represent an incubation period during which new ideas germinate to prepare intuitive leaps of thought.

The creative process is unthinkable without *imagination* which makes it possible to rearrange the perceptions and impressions stored in the mind. Imagination produces living pictures in the artist's mind. Witness Ivan Goncharov, a Russian 19th-century writer: "...faces give you no peace, pester you, pose in scenes, I hear snatches of their conversations – and. God may forgive me, it often seemed to me that I was not imagining all this but that it was hovering about me and all I had to do was to look and think."

Imagination has many varieties: phantasmagoric, as with Hoffman, philosophical and lyrical, as with Tyutchev, romantic and exalted (Vrubel), morbidly exaggerated (Salvador Dali), mystery-laden (Ingmar Bergman), starkly realistic (Federico Fellini), etc. Creative imagination gives aesthetic pleasure, and in this it differs from hallucinations.

Conscious and *subconscious*, *reason* and *intuition* are involved in the artistic process, with the subconscious processes playing a particular role.

American psychologist Frank Barron tested 56 American writers (of whom 30 were popular, original and artistically gifted and 26 merely "prolific") and came to the conclusion that in writers, emotionalism and intuition are highly developed and prevail over the rational. Of the 56 writers tested 50 were found to be "intuitive" individuals (89 per cent) which compares with just 25 per cent in the control group of persons whose professions are remote from art.³

The high role of the subconscious in artistic creation was noted already by Ancient Greek philosophers (in particular Plato) who treated that phenomenon as an extatic. God-inspired, Bacchic state. For Homer a *rhapsod* is a singer who sees light from above, and Pindar called the poet a prophet of the Muses.

The aesthetics of romanticism made an absolute of the subconscious in the creative process. Schelling wrote: "...the artist finds himself involved in the creative process involuntarily and even contrary to his inner desire... Just as a doomed man does not do what he wants or intends to do but fulfils what has been inscrutably ordained by fate in whose dominion he is, so does the artist... he is exposed to a force that draws a line between him and other people inducing him to depict and articulate things that are not fully open to his gaze possessing unfathomable depth."⁴

In the 20th century the subconscious in the artistic process attracted the

attention of Sigmund Freud and his psychoanalytic school. The psychoanalysts turned the artist as a creative individual into an object of introspective and critical observation. Psychoanalysis assigns absolute importance to the subconscious in the creative process giving prominence to the subconscious sexual element. According to Freudians, the artist is a personality who sublimates his sexual energy in art, which is a kind of neurosis. Freud believed that through a creative act the artist expels from his consciousness socially unrealisable needs and thus resolves the conflicts of real life. According to Freud, unsatisfied desires stimulate fantasy. In reality, however, the subconscious, though important, is not the only cause of the creative process.

Artists themselves draw attention to intuition as an important element in their work. This is how Goethe described the process whereby verses are born: "I had no foreknowledge or anticipation of them, but they took instant possession of me and demanded immediate materialisation, so that I had to write them down there and then like a lunatic." For all the significance of the subconscious and intuitive processes in artistic creation making an absolute of them is untenable in scientific terms. The creative process is an interaction of subconscious and conscious, intuition and reason, natural ability and acquired habits. Schiller wrote that "the subconscious combined with reason makes an artist-poet".

Although the share of reason in the creative process is not predominant quantitatively it determines qualitatively many essential aspects of creativity. The conscious element controls its main goal, the super-task and the outlines of the artistic conception of the work, illuminates a "bright spot" in the artist's mind making it a focus for his entire life and artistic experience. The conscious element takes care of self-observation and self-control, helping the artist to analyse and assess his work critically and draw conclusions that would lead to further artistic growth.

The conscious element is particularly important in the making of large-scale works. While a miniature may be entirely the result of a stroke of inspiration, a large-scale work needs profound and serious pondering. It would not be irrelevant to recall what Tolstoy wrote about his *War and Peace*: "You cannot imagine the difficulty for me of the preliminary work of deeply ploughing the field in which I am *forced* to sow. To think over and over what may happen to all the future people in my future work, a very large one, and to think over millions of possible combinations and select 1/1,000,000th of them is terribly difficult." Dostoyevsky, too, stressed the importance of the conscious elements

describing his work on *The Karamazov Brothers*: "I am now summing up what was thought over, composed and recorded during three years... Would you believe it, although it was written during three years, some chapters I write and reject, rewrite again and again."

The creative process is particularly fruitful when the artist is in a state of *inspiration*. That is a distinct psychological state of creativity when thinking is clear and intensive, associations are rich and prompt, insight into the essence of life's problems is sharp, and the life and artistic experience "erupts" powerfully and is involved in the creative process.

Inspiration generates tremendous creative energy, it is almost a synonym of creativity. It is not for nothing that Pegasus, the winged horse, has been since ancient times the poetic symbol of inspiration. The state of inspiration ensures the optimal combination of the intuitive and conscious elements in creative work.

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, S. 201.

² S.A. Papert, "The Mathematical Unconscious", in: *On Aesthetics in Science*. Cambridge, Mass., 1978, pp. 105-19.

³ F. Barron, *Creativity and Personal Freedom*. Princeton. New Jersey, 1968.

⁴ Friedrich Schelling, *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*, Verlag Philipp Reclam jun., Leipzig, 1979, p. 263.

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

**The Psychological Mechanisms of Artistic Perception.
Perceptual Attitude**

In a sense the psychology of artistic perception is a mirror image of the psychology of artistic creation. The perception of a work of art proceeds on many planes; it comprises direct emotional experience, grasping the logic of the author's thought, and the rich and ramified associations that involve the entire field of culture in the act of perception.

One aspect of artistic perception is "transposing" the images and situations in a work to one's own situation in life, i.e. *identification* of one's own self with that of the character. Identification is combined with opposing the perceiving subject to the hero whom he regards as different. This combination enables the recipient to act out in imagination and artistic experience a situation he has not played in life and to benefit by the experience of that vicariously played role.

The *element of play* in artistic perception is rooted in the play aspects of art which is born through imitating and copying man's working activity, and preparing him for it. In the act of perceiving a work of art all these essential and genetic elements of art are repeated. In a play situation the recipient acquires experience passed on to him by the artist through a system of images. The play element in artistic perception is an operation carried out by the sender of information and directed towards the perception and consciousness of the recipient.

The whole complex procedure of perception in art cannot however be reduced to the above aspects. An important aid is *synaesthesia*, i.e. the interaction of sight, hearing and other senses in the process of perception.

Let us consider the matter a little more closely taking our examples from what is perhaps, perceptually, the most challenging of all the arts – music.

Musical sound images to a certain extent influence the visual sequences in the recipient's mind. This phenomenon underlies the problem of colouring in the sound of poetry which was particularly prominent in symbolist poetry. The same effect is at the basis of the colour vision of music which some composers and artists had. The awareness of that quality of music gave rise to the

problem of colour-music, notably in the work of the Russian composer and pianist, Scriabin. On the other hand the Lithuanian artist Ciurlionis did much to trace the musical elements in art.

The colour aspect in the perception of sound is but one possible auxiliary psychophysical mechanism of artistic perception. Another has to do with *literary-plot and visual figure associations*. That element is found in the perception of musical works, and not only of such synthetic varieties of musical art as, say, opera, songs or oratorios, which have a certain literary narrative basis, but also in symphony music. The famous French pianist Marguerite Long attests that Claude Debussy perceived music in visual and literary images. It is not by chance that he saw the minstrels, rooted as they were in Anglo-Saxon life, through the eyes of Toulouse-Lautrec. Their art "has the fascination of places of pleasure, an atmosphere of night cabarets".

Do literary and visual associations help in the perception of music? Some theorists feel that a listener to music must have pictures and plastic images before his mental gaze, that visual narratives invariably unfold before him. Otherwise the experience of music is incomplete. Other theorists, stressing the specific nature of the musical idiom, its intrinsic richness and expressiveness, believe that music needs no translation of sound into visual images and that the latter is an infringement on the purity of music. In point of fact the perception of music is a complex and manifold process and it may include synaesthesia, visual and other non-musical associations.

Heine in his *Florentine Nights* speaks about a second musical vision, the ability to associate every tone with a sound figure, and he describes his impressions of a concert by a great violinist: "...every sweep of his bow brought visual figures and pictures before my eyes; in the language of sounding hieroglyphics Paganini was telling me about a host of vivid events". Heine's imagination transformed musical images into visual and literary ones. Not that this breaks the norms of musical perception. The nature of associations in the mind of a person listening to music is determined by that person's specific gifts and experience, the arsenal of artistic and life impressions stored in his memory. The French psychologist Ribot noted that music most commonly evokes pictures and visual scenes with people who are engaged in drawing or painting.

An important feature of the perception of art is its *allegorical-associative character*. Associations range from analogies with known facts of artistic culture, non-artistic associations to memories of past experiences.

Associations enrich the perception of music by putting it within the context of

the listener's entire life experience. Through rhythm extra-musical associations are related to gesture, movement and dance. A sensitive choreographic "reading" helps towards deeper musical perception. The mechanism of perceiving a work of art involves *space and time associations*. The perception of a work of art includes three important elements: *the perception of the present* (the immediate musical sound, the here-and-now perception of what is depicted on a canvas or what one is reading at the moment, etc.), *the perception of the past* (constant comparison with what one has previously heard, seen or read; in poetry that aspect of perception is enhanced by rhymes and in painting by the "reading" and filling in of events that preceded those portrayed), *apperception of the future* (*anticipation of the development of the artist's thought by grasping its inner logic; the idea of consequence in representational art, or the development of a literary plot, etc.*).

One of the peculiarities of the mechanism of perceiving art stems from the fact that every art is in a certain sense a *performing* art. For example, in a literary utterance one can visualise a programmed performer. In other words, in literary perception the performer ("for himself") and recipient are combined in one and the same person. Reading, like "performance for oneself" in the perception of other arts, has its own style. The same literary work can be "performed for oneself" in different ways, i.e. can be read and interpreted in different keys.

An important psychological factor in the perception of art is the *perceptual set* which we assume on the basis of all previous culture historically fixed in our minds by all our previous experience. *The perceptual set is the set of presuppositions with regard to a work of art that lasts throughout the artistic experience.*

The emergence of new musical ideas described as "new music" occurs cyclically (about once every 300 years). Each "new music" causes a radical change in the notions of harmony. To be able to perceive the new in art there must be a readiness not to cling to old sets, an ability to modernise them and to perceive a new work in all its idiosyncrasy and historical originality with an open mind. The history of art warns us to be cautious in making final judgements. The renewal of art and the appearance of new means and principles of making art need not detract from the importance of past aesthetic values. Masterpieces are eternal contemporaries of mankind and one assumes their artistic authority as a factor in their perception.

In the perception of a literary text an important aspect is the *perceptual*

mood which arises from *perceptual anticipation*. Clues to the latter are contained in the title of the work and the accompanying descriptions and explanations. Thus, even before we start reading a literary text we know whether we are going to perceive verse, prose or drama and we learn from the subtitle indicating the genre whether we are going to read a poem or a novel, a tragedy or a comedy, etc. That preliminary information determines the *level of expectancy* and goes some way to determine the presuppositions in their perception.

Furthermore, the very opening lines, scenes and episodes give us an idea of the integrity of the work, and the nature of the integrity which the recipient is to digest aesthetically. In other words, *style*, which is the vehicle, guarantee and exponent of the artistic integrity of a work makes the recipient tune in to a certain emotional-aesthetic wave. The perceptual-informative function of style consists precisely in that it determines *the potential of perception*, i.e. the readiness to perceive a certain volume of factual and value information.

The perceptual set engenders a certain *perceptual expectancy*, and that in turn includes tuning in to a certain *style* and *genre*. Sergei Eisenstein rightly pointed out that an audience brought up on the comedies of Charlie Chaplin or Harpo Marx is likely to receive each of their works as a comedy. That accounted for quite a few misunderstandings when an author switched from one genre to another. If a comedian wants to work in drama or a tragedian wants to take up comedy, they must be aware of these dangers.

Problems in the Study of Artistic Perception

The perception of art is an intimate, private and personal process that takes place in the depths of the consciousness and is extremely difficult to record when observed. The process depends on the life exposure and cultural background of the individual (stable factors) and his mood and psychological state (changeable factors).

The first exposition of the problems of artistic perception is to be found in Aristotle's theory of catharsis. He thought that art purged the soul by making it experience compassion and fear. Throughout the long history of aesthetics the theory of perceiving art remained undeveloped owing to its complexity and dependency on other disciplines, such as psychology and psychophysiology. The main method has been the *introspection* of the theorist watching his own reactions to a work of art which were then compared to the introspections of other people. Today *experimental* techniques are available for the study of artistic perception: its character and intensity are measurable and

can be an object of psychophysiological experiments.

The first experiments in the study of artistic perception, dating back to the late 19th century, involved listeners giving verbal descriptions of their visual and emotional sensations in reply to questions that were "open" (describing the moods and associations in one's own words) and "closed" (the recipient was asked to choose from a set of epithets the ones that best reflected his impressions from listening to a piece of music). The result was sometimes imaginative descriptions of impressions received from the music heard. These experiments do not go far enough in revealing the complex mechanism of artistic perception but they do reveal *the diversity of its individual differences and its two forms*: 1) perception proper (understanding the meaning of the work, deciphering its sign system and understanding the musical text); 2) reaction to the perception (the nature of emotions and thoughts evoked in the recipient's soul). Experimental study of artistic perception is made more difficult by the fact that the recipient finds himself in constrained circumstances. Aware of being observed, he tries to meet the experimenter's expectancies, "forces" himself to concentrate to be able to describe his impressions.

Perception depends on the general cultural background and aesthetic experience of the perceiver, on his acquaintance with the idiom of the particular type of art and his discernment in deciphering it. One can, on that basis, identify *typological groups* of recipients sharing the same attitude to art and the same value orientation. The specific traits of these groups must be borne in mind in studying perception. Knowing to which group a listener belongs one can predict with a fair degree of accuracy what his reaction would be to a given work of art.

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ART AS THE OBJECT OF PERCEPTION

Artistic Text and Its Perception

Artistic perception is the relationship between a work of art and a recipient which depends on the subjective traits of the latter and the objective features of the artistic text, on artistic tradition and on social attitudes and language-semiotic conventions shared by the author and the recipient. All these factors are historically conditioned by the epoch, the environment and the individual background. The subjective aspects of perception stem from individual traits, a person's natural endowments, fantasy, memory, experience, the stock of life and artistic impressions, cultural training of the mind and emotions. The preparedness for perceiving a work of art depends on what the recipient has personally lived through or has learnt from books or borrowed from other arts. The latter could be said to be derivative life experience.

An artistic text conveys the author's message in the plastic form and in the form of ideas not mediated by images. The semantic focus of the work may shift either to visual or conceptual approaches. One can neither reject nor exaggerate these elements in the art work. Thus, in painting and sculpture the title is the non-plastic element of perception. In the literary text, along with the representational element the non-plastic element is always present. This is witnessed by the experience of intellectual literature and the presence of symbolic images in literary works belonging to different trends and genres. Lessing in his theoretical studies convincingly refuted the thesis that "poetry is speaking art".

A work of art is a structure determining perception, encouraging the subject to perceive. That is why art, and aesthetics after it, must be oriented to the constantly evolving receptive consciousness of contemporaries. They should address themselves to an artistically perceptive mind running ahead of its epoch. It is important not to regard the reader, listener or viewer as the end point of artistic communication. A person inspired, educated and suggestively infected by a work of art exerts a certain influence on reality and on the subsequent artistic process. Nor is this influence itself the end because it provides the starting point for the further progress of art.

The ontology of a work of art (its social being) reveals some paradoxes. With

the appearance of a ready art product the artistic text passes from the emergence stage to the stage of being and art activity becomes "materialised activity". But it is "materialised activity" only potentially. It becomes a product "in reality" only in the process of consumption. The work of art is internalised in the process of perception and becomes part of the social and individual consciousness of which it is a materialised expression. And the existence of an art text outside consumption is not complete, it exists merely as a potential work.

The world of the art work is embodied in language and the perceiver is let into that world by the content of the artistic text, i.e. an ordered, complex, relatively complete sequence of signs corresponding to an ordered, complex and relatively complete semantic structure. In that sense the text is always closed. But the art work is a text unclosed, a text with all its social links, social origins and being, and its social function.

A work of art is identical to itself only relatively. It would have been absolutely equal to itself if the material objects expressing its meaning (signs) were related in the process of art perception to unchanging language, reality, ideals and recipients. This has nothing to do, however, with the relativist view that there are as many works of art as there are perceptions of it. For all the changeability of the social fields on which the existence and perception of a work depends (culture, public opinion, language) it contains a fixed programme for perception: it is either a tragedy or a comedy; its plot reproduces a certain sequence of events; it has a stable system of plastic images and the system of ideas and evaluations underlying it. An art work is personally addressed to the perceiving individual (herein lies the specific character of artistic perception), it establishes a personal contact with the perceiver and interacts with his unique individual experience. Every reader has his own image of Natasha Rostova and his own conception of *War and Peace*. In a sense, there are as many Hamlets as there are viewers. And you have to multiply the multitude of viewers by the multitude of performers (there are as many Hamlets as there are viewers who have seen Hamlet played by Smoktunovsky, Skofield, Vysotsky). And yet Hamlet is one, he is Shakespeare's Hamlet. It is an invariant and performers and recipients merely vary the artistic information it carries. The art text sets limits to the "spread" of different interpretations. The "spread" appears because the work encounters different epochs, different audiences and different individuals with their unique life experience. The work engages the reader in a dialogue. The perception of an artistic text is communication with it. The text and the

recipient meet each other and enrich each other.

During a performance of a children's play one can observe how youthful recipients react to what is happening on the stage. "Look behind you! " they shout to Little Red Riding Hood who does not notice the Wolf. "Go away! " they shout to the gray bandit.

Children behave as if the artistic text were not closed and could be interfered with in a process of feedback. But what is the right way to perceive art? Is it proper to exhibit such an active and immediate reaction? The story is told that during a performance of Shakespeare's tragedy *Othello* a grown-up member of the audience was so childishly naive and spontaneous, so carried away by the action on the stage and so infuriated by Iago's perfidy that he leapt on to the stage and killed Iago, that is, the actor who played him.

When he came to and realised what he had done, he killed himself. Legend has it that they were buried together under a tombstone with the words, "To the best actor and the best viewer". But was he the best viewer? Is it right to treat an art work with childish naivety and take it for reality? Or is the best formula for perceiving a work of art one in which the emotions it evokes translate themselves not into action but into artistic experience? Goethe identified *three types* of art perception: 1) delight in beauty without reasoning; 2) reasoning without delight; 3) reasoning with delight and delight with reasoning. In Goethe's opinion it is only those who are capable of the latter type of art perception, who recreate the art work anew, only they can take in the whole richness of artistic thought. The third type of artistic perception is true to the nature of the art work. The process of artistic perception is very complex and even Goethe's penetrating judgement leaves unanswered many questions regarding the procedure of artistic perception. Should perception be active and to what extent? Is perception a sharing in the creative process or merely an adequate reading, emotional and intellectual copying of the text? Should the perceiver distinguish between artistic images and reality or should he identify the character with a living person? What should the post-reception be, i.e. should the recipient imitate the character and his behaviour or is it beyond the programme of perception? The number of such questions, like the number of riddles and paradoxes of artistic perceptions, can easily be multiplied.

In the process of artistic perception the recipient's point of view alternates between that of the observer and the observed. The viewer sees everything through Hamlet's eyes and at the same time sees Hamlet himself through his own eyes. Every viewer is at once Hamlet and an observer of Hamlet.

The character of artistic perception is determined not only by the art text but also by the nature of the recipient. Before perceiving the meaning and value of a work the recipient perceives its *intonation and emotional side*. The entire perception process takes place against the background of intonation which acts as a catalyst. The recipient is exposed to its suggestive impact.

One type of broadly understood intonation in any art work is the "gesture" of the hero. Bertolt Brecht stressed the importance of gesture technique for stage speech which must follow the speaker's gestures. The communicative potential of intonation is revealed in the inner gesture which is capable of influencing the recipient. Not only the actor but also the reader applies the gesture method in reading a literary work to himself or reading it aloud so as to realise the intonational potential of the work. Intonation carries both substantive information and value judgement on the world artistically portrayed.

Artistic perception turns a work of art into a fact of consciousness and puts the author's artistic thought within the mental reach of the recipient who, to the best of his abilities and cultural background, rises to meet the minds of Shakespeare, Mozart, Raphael and Pushkin. The attitude of great artists to life, their world view and their artistic conceptions enter, to varying degrees, the consciousness of the recipient providing models for his attitude to reality.

The Laws of Artistic Perception

The recipient's effort to understand an art work is one aspect of *aesthetic pleasure*. There is a logical link between the accessibility and the hedonistic potential of a work of art. The simpler an art text the less challenge it presents to the perceiver and the lower the hedonistic potential. The more complex the text the greater perceptual challenge it presents, putting it out of range of more recipients, but on the other hand the greater effort required to perceive the work enhances the artistic delight. The extremes in these opposite trends are the mass culture with its primitive pop art and kitsch and the snobbish elitist art. True art in its classical models unerringly strikes a balance between the two opposing trends, *the proportion between accessibility and the hedonistic potential*.

The popular character (*narodnost*) of an art work is not a synonym of "easy-to-understand". Identification of the two provides an easy cover for the kind of stuff produced by mass culture. The social mission of art is to lead the public. The artist must be ahead of his audience.

Retrograde critics often greet innovatory art with the declaration that "the masses do not understand it". The social value of art lies not only in what has been assimilated by the broad public but also in what potentially contains high intellectual and artistic values. Reaching up to and assimilating these spiritual riches is an important cultural task of society. The accessibility of art should be seen as a historically changeable category in the theory of artistic perception. Artistic pleasure is a specific aspect of artistic perception. It is a guarantee and indicator that art promotes the intrinsic value of the individual and does not regard him as merely a social agent in the solution of certain historical tasks. Indeed art in its masterpieces conveys the important humanistic message that although historical progress is achieved through the efforts of men it is achieved not contrary to the individual but for the sake of the individual.

Assertion of the importance of the individual in his own right provides an additional stimulus for the individual's socialisation. The problem of artistic pleasure has been the subject of quantitative and qualitative analysis in modern science. One of the wider known formulas, suggested by the American mathematician Birkhoff, says that the aesthetic measure (M) is directly proportional to order (O) and inversely proportional to complexity (C). The Birkhoff formula is $M = O/C$. This writer for one finds more convincing the formula proposed by Aysanck although it too fails to cover all the aspects of the complex phenomenon of aesthetic measure. He believes that aesthetic measure is a product, and not a ratio of order and complexity and his formula is $M = O \times C$. And indeed, the intensity of perception and the pleasure derived are directly proportional to the order and complexity of the art phenomenon. Given other equal conditions a less complex work is easier to understand, more popular but less effective. It is an essential element of artistic perception that the recipient experiences the greatest fulfilment and satisfaction when the aesthetic form is repeatable and diverse.

Perception of art is a creative activity which is directly proportional to aesthetic pleasure which in turn is directly proportional to the order and complexity of the art work and the balance of diversity and repetition. To be sure, the complexity of a work must be matched and indeed be the result of its artistic and conceptual depth. Genuine art does not trail behind the recipient but goes ahead of him raising a person and his artistic taste to a higher level. The social and aesthetic effectiveness and value of art depends on how far its potential outstrips the cultural potential of the recipient. The following futurological conclusions can be drawn from the above:

first, artistic culture is likely to see the growing trend towards orderliness and greater complexity as well as simultaneous increase of the two extremes: diversity and repetition;

second, the deepening of the aesthetic impact on the individual will go hand-in-hand with the broadening influence of art on the masses covering wider and wider social strata, involving them in the highest and most complex forms of art;

third, because all work tends to become creative work, there will be a growing need in artistic culture for a diversity of art idioms and diversity of arts.

**AESTHETICS: THE GENEALOGY OF ART AND
THE AESTHETIC ATTITUDE TO THE WORLD
The Science of the Origin of the Arts and the Aesthetic Feeling**

MAGIC AND ART

Primitive Culture and the Use Of Magic to Cross the Abyss of Impotence

The origin of art is lost in the obscurity of time. That mysterious process took place between 40,000 and 50,000 years ago. Primitive man, whose life was hard and joyless being daily struggle for survival, suddenly began to draw on the walls of caves by cutting lines on them, to put up stone and clay pillars (the proto-sculptures) and to represent scenes of hunting in theatrical action. How does one account for these processes and their results? What caused the appearance of art?

The methods of investigating primitive culture and theorising on the problem of the origin of art are: 1) the study of archeological data and monuments of ancient culture; 2) the ethnographic study of peoples still at the primitive stage; 3) the study of atavistic forms in modern culture (superstitions, surviving ritualistic and magical ideas, etc.); 4) interpreting the ancient history of mankind; 5) theoretical "extrapolation into the past" from known later phenomena and forms of artistic culture, and 6) crossing the information gap, by theoretically fantacising, making hypotheses from known facts and checking them against new facts that come to hand.

The imitative arts began not from representation of figures but from what today is perceived as signs and symbols and what in the historical situation of the paleolithic man amounted to a duplication of the world. Examples in point are the symbols of wounds, hand prints which are "signs" of man's mastery over natural objects and "symbols" of his ability to act on the world purposively in accordance with social needs. In the early paleolithic period (40,000-50,000 years ago) the magic ritual preceding a hunt gave rise to the first symbolic representation, the "sign" of a wound which for the primitive man was a real wound anticipating, projecting and predetermining the wound to be inflicted on the quarry. The "sign" had a functional meaning: the hunter was preparing to deliver a blow at the animal hunted. That early image was in fact neither a symbol nor a sign (it did not stand for anything as a sign does), but a second reality reflecting the primitive man's world view. It was not so much an instrument of cognition as a means of forming the relationship between a primitive collective and reality through a magical

change of the world.

In the history of human culture all peoples had three early images of related meaning: the hand¹, a magical representation of man's function in providing food, the vulva, designating the woman's child-bearing function, and the wound, a magical *realia* designating victory over the animal, success in hunting, a magical symbol of supremacy over the animal.

Thus, the earliest stage of artistic culture has to do not with signs and symbols but with the duplication of reality.

Figurativeness, representation proper are not essential, the important thing being not the sign referring us to a certain sense and meaning of phenomena but ability to cross the abyss of impotence in the face of the world effected by recreating the world which man was incapable of mastering. Magic images helped people to cope with the infinitely difficult and hazardous tasks in the real world (gaining the upper hand over animals, for example). Later, along with magical drawings there appear signs and symbols, representational figurative forms of primitive art which mark the start of art's image stage of development. It could be said that the first themes and problems in the history of art in its most ancient region were work and love (seen as child-bearing) i.e. the creative, constructive, life-giving forces of society. Ancient art glorifies man's hand as an instrument for creating key social values (dwelling, hunting weapons and food), the vulva as the means of creating new tribesmen, and the wound on the animal's body as a magic way of provoking success in hunting. These magical duplicates of reality determine the main narrative and thematic trends of the subsequent development of art in the early paleolithic period.

Magical representations (mimetic and imitative, the second hypostasis of reality) are neither signs nor images. They could be said to be *magical realia*. Later they evolve into sign images and these in turn into narrative images. Thus, a stone embodying an animal which provided a target for inflicting wounds later becomes a life-size model of the animal and then a sculptural image of it. Paleolithic art features the hunter, the man who provides livelihood. He watches the animal from his hiding place among the reeds (an engraving on the shoulder blade of an animal found at Maja d'Asila). That representation, for all its figurativeness, is not an image reflecting reality, not a sign replacing it but a method of duplicating reality and a magical means of mastering it. When primitive man shot arrows and threw clay balls at the representation of an animal he was performing a magical operation of "hunting". The image was identified completely, or almost completely, with

the object. It was only later that the conventional cave representations of the object came to be perceived as the signs and images of the object.

Initially (for the earliest artist) the picture was not a sign, not an image of the object but the object itself, its other (magical) guise.

The process of the birth of visual art is similar to the ritualistic-magical process that gave rise to theatre. Man put on a mask or painted his face not to be a symbol or sign of an animal but to actually be that animal in a different guise, a magical embodiment of the animal. So, the earliest primitive stage of art should be described not as a sign stage but as a ritualistic-magical stage. Developed art does not expect that its images would be taken for reality. But the earliest, ritualistic-mythological stage of art, owing to the syncretic character of its products (and in particular to the fusion of artistic, religious-mythological and ritualistic-magical thinking), presupposes identification with real objects. That is to be found not only at the sources of theatre, painting and sculpture, but also at the sources of literary images. For, in calling something by its name, the primitive man gave substance to its essence.

The icon is not a sign of a deity, but a window into another world. It can be said that for a believer the icon is not a picture of god but its worldly hypostasis which enables man to communicate with him personally. The icon is a survival in modern culture of the ritualistic-ritualistic-magical stage of development. The non-sign character of the icon (which does not denote a deity, does not stand for it but is another form of its being, a window for communicating with the supreme spirit) is akin to the non-sign character of the ancient cliff drawings, which did not denote an animal but presented another form of its existence for a more intimate communication with it, for performing magical rituals on it. The non-sign cliff drawings of animals were not artistic in character and did not perform the function of art. The artistic function was "dormant" as a possibility. It was not until the 17th-19th centuries that these pictures came to be gradually perceived as highly artistic and included in the artistic heritage of mankind. That phenomenon (like any ancient process whose study takes us to the lowest genetic limit of the object, to its sources) highlights the active ontological role of artistic perception which not only involves understanding the art work but takes part in its creation. Why did it take so long to perceive the non-sign pictures as signs of an artistic culture and to include them within the body of human artistic culture? Because it is only in that period that the conditions matured for mastering these phenomena which is explained by

- 1) the accumulating scientific evidence providing that cliff drawings were widespread and their appearance in the culture of the primitive man was logical;
- 2) the accumulating experience in the perception of various art cultures due to travel, growing trade, mutual communication between peoples and the rise of an all-embracing global system of economic relations;
- 3) the rise of the need for integrating the artistic experience of different people as manifested, among other things, in the worldwide creation of museums as repositories of the art of different peoples.

The interpretation of an old cliff picture as a primitive artistic image of a real animal is a modernisation. In fact it was proto-art, pre-art which had ritual and magical functions. The pictures recorded not man's aesthetic attitude to the world (which was only beginning within the cultural process) but a magical attitude. An aesthetic attitude grasps the significance of a given object for mankind and the degree to which the human race has mastered that object. It expresses the degree of human freedom. But all these were close to zero. Man was not yet master of the world and its objects and was not free with regard to them. So he tried, with the help of a magical act, to break from total unmastery to complete mastery, to gain freedom at the cost of a colossal effort of the spirit. Art could not have appeared before a system of aesthetic relations, and with the birth of the latter the most ancient pictures were included in that system and acquired artistic meaning for people belonging to a given social group.

Magic is a desperate effort to overcome man's practical powerlessness. It is the attempt of the slave of nature to become its master for a historical instant.

Magic is an attempt to solve material and practical tasks by a pure act of the spirit, a duplication of reality by creating a materialised mental likeness of it.

Magic is an attempt to solve practical tasks by manipulating that mental likeness. The magical act is aimed at mastering an object. It is a desperate and valiant effort to master a formidable object with regard to which man is not free. Magic is freedom obtained by a slave of nature through a tremendous effort that focuses all his spiritual energy, like a laser beam, on a single area of life. Magic is a way of mobilising the spirit. It inherently presupposes telekinesis (influencing material objects with one's mind) and suggestion (influencing the minds of other people). Magic tries to solve material tasks (mastering the world and objects difficult to access) through spiritual activity. Art uses material and spiritual activity to solve spiritual tasks (transforming the human spirit). Art is a form of education of the spirit and suggestion is

secondary and non-obligatory. Art owes many of its qualities to signs. An artistic image is an artistic statement constructed of signs although the image (statement) itself is not a sign. The sign is aimed not at mastering an object but of mastering others' or one's own behaviour. That is why art is semiotic and a work of art is a meta-sign aimed at mastering social and individual behaviour. Art is externally disinterested and functionless, although inwardly its function is broad and universal. Magical realia are geared to a function. They recreate the original in order to manipulate it. Magical realia gave rise to mythological thinking, a further step towards understanding the world. Mythological images are phantasmagoric including as they do animal-humans (sphinxes, centaurs, etc.). It was the hunter's male face that was likened to that of an animal because it was man who hunted and interacted with the animal, sometimes disguising himself as one by putting on animal skins. That situation prompted combinations of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic features in man's pictures and "theatrical" rituals.

Aesthetic Activity According to the Laws of Beauty or Magical Activity According to the Laws of Super-Effort?

Dance in paleolithic culture was also not artistic but ritualistic-magical. This is borne out by archeological and ethnographic data which points in the same direction. Thus, in the Cave of Three Brothers there are vivid pictures of a sorcerer and disguised creatures combining features of various animals, birds and humans: deer's antlers and ears, owl's eyes, animal's paws, a horse's tail, human beard, trunk and legs. The sorcerer is polymorphous, super-fantastic in appearance combining features of a horse, a deer, a predator and a human. We see a picture of a ritualistic-magical dance and pantomime in which man imitates the ways of the animal likening and at times identifying himself with the latter. Peter Ucko, Andree Rosenfeld, G. Luquet² and other scholars rightly interpret that ritual pantomime as hunters' magic to ensure the multiplication of the hunted animals, success in hunting, contact with the animal, cajoling and appeasing it. This archeological data and its modern scientific interpretation is corroborated by ethnographers. Thus, the inhabitants of southern Africa try to appease the animal in their magical dances. The deep significance of such a dance is that it is supposed to lure the game into the hunter's trap through sorcery. That region of Africa has more than twenty types of dance imitative of the jackal, hyena, leopard, lion, tiger, cheetah, dove, hawk, eagle, elephant and other animals and birds. The dancing tribesman bends forward in a clever imitation of the movements of a

quadruped. The viewers recognize the animal imitated by the dancer. Dancers do not take part in the singing which is the business of the chorus. But they produce sounds imitating the cries of animals. All the ritual dancers are disguised.

It is an ethnographic picture of an ancient hunting ritual, a ritual of mastering the prey. The ethnographic picture enlarges upon and enlivens the painted paleontological analogue discovered by archeologists. The ritual repeats all the main details of the animal's behaviour and the hunter's actions.

Ancient man hunted, killed and ate animals. That process created a bond between him and the animal and in the process of eating it the human body became an extension, as it were, of the animal's body. That underlies man's desire to appease the animal, to find a common language with it, to become reincarnated in the animal and to resemble it physically through the masquerade of disguises and the imitation of the animal's movements and ways in the dance. The underlying meaning of the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic realia in the magical ritual is economic (the hunter's link with the animal) and totemic-clannish, and this too is based on the primitive economic situation (hunting and eating the animal, lack of forces to guarantee supremacy over the animal, sufficient propagation of the animal population and its availability in accordance with man's needs).

The totem is male. It is the male hunter who represents the totem animal in ritual dances. This is due to the fact that the idea of the totem was born from the practice of hunting, which was as a rule a male pursuit. The totem animal usually had great economic significance and was regarded as an ancestor, a kin, a protector of the family. The hunting and eating of the animal was a procedure of establishing historical kinship with it. In a sense the animal which had been hunted and eaten by preceding generations of tribesmen was an ancestor of all the members of the tribe. Hence the ideas about the relationship of women to the totem. The totem group is seen as the product of a woman's marriage to a totem animal, which is one more reason for the totem always being male. The woman appears as a creature for the procreation of the species both in the primitive representations of the vulva and in later totemic myths.

The magical realia represents the animal as a whole, as an independent creature fully identical to the real animal. Hence the naturalistic treatment of animals in cliff drawings and in dances. It is not by chance that the image of the animal bears real wounds inflicted by spears and other hunting weapons. It is not by chance either that there are stains of red ocher representing the

animal's blood "the way it is in real life". For the primitive man a magical realia was as close as possible to the animal since it was supposed to be identical to its other existence. Not surprisingly therefore the resemblance was sometimes achieved by stuffing a bear or wearing the skins of animals imitated by dancers. The maximum resemblance facilitated the act of magic because the magic object could be manipulated in the same way as the actual animal. A strike with a spear administered to the representation of the animal was supposed to weaken the animal to be hunted the following day and made men more confident of success. The naturalism in the representation of the animal in a paleontological cave was magical and not artistic.

But that representation had everything necessary for being perceived as a highly artistic image of the animal once the magical realia is included in the system of aesthetic relations. While not in themselves being art in terms of the functions and tasks they were meant to perform by the creators and their relatives, the cliff pictures (magical realia) contained the ready-made set of qualities which, after being put in the context of aesthetic relations and related to the humanity as a genus could at the later stages of history be perceived as works of art. These works had the quality of beauty and could bring and still bring aesthetic pleasure.

How could it happen that man, crushed by the adverse and hazardous circumstances of his life, was able to perceive and recreate the surrounding world as a sphere of freedom, i.e. a sphere of beauty? The point is that if paleolithic man had taken a full-scale aesthetic view of the world and if the objects he depicted, he would have reflected the harshness of his situation and the unfreedom with regard to the world. The animal would, in such a truly realistic portrayal, have appeared as dreadfully fearsome. But one must bear in mind that paleolithic man was not creating works of art and treated his object not in aesthetic but in magical terms. That enabled him to make the incredible leap from the domain of necessity into the domain of freedom. The magical act made such a leap possible and the animal appeared as beautiful and kindred to man, and not as its real hideous self. The wonder of magic enabled man to accomplish the super-task, i.e. to push the absolute limits of his ability in life (while hunting) rather like a circus actor during a performance. And that helped man to reproduce the world of his interests as a domain of which he was master. That is what enabled later generations to perceive the cliff drawings as truly beautiful art images. That is why cliff drawings appear to us as art, although at their birth they were products and instruments of magical mastering of the world, and the artist's concern was

not to observe the laws of proportion and beauty but to extend the limits of human capacity.

¹ One of the earliest representations of the hand (a positive print) is to be found in the ritual complex in the Bausa cave. It is dated to the Mousterian culture (the latest culture of the early paleolithic period).

² P.J. Ucko, A. Rosenfeld, *L'Art paleolithique*, Paris, 1966, pp. 133-36;
G.H. Luquet, *L'Art et la religion des hommes fossiles*, Paris, 1926, pp. 220-21.

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THE ORIGIN OF ART AND LITERATURE

The Ritual-Magic and Artistic-Aesthetic Attitude to the Object Portrayed

The appearance of the sign, a symbol of beauty and freedom (mastery of an object is the sphere of beauty and freedom) is the first and crucial step towards a mythological, as opposed to a ritualistic-magical attitude to the world and its phenomena, i.e. an attitude that is no longer utilitarian albeit not yet spiritual and aesthetic. The full-scale aesthetic attitude appears later when it is nonutilitarian and disinterested, i.e. interested in the universally human way (broadly practical).

Another key step towards the aesthetic perception of the world was stepping "through the looking glass". The cliff drawings at that stage feature not only the animal, not only the wound on its body, not only the weapons of hunting (not spears thrown from outside but pictures of spears flying towards the picture of the animal), but also the hunter himself. No longer does the hunter throw the spear in magical-ritualistic ecstasy from the space of the cave into a magical imitative object (the picture of the animal on the wall expressive of its real presence and real killing). No, the hunter has himself stepped over the boundary between the first and second reality to join the images on the wall. There he performs the utilitarian action of hunting and the utilitarian-spiritual action of the magical ritual of hunting. Now the man in the cave has no particular need to spear the animal's picture on the wall. This is done for him by his double who has entered the land beyond the looking glass and become a figure depicted on the wall. Now the man in the cave had the opportunity to regard the animal portrayed not as the object of the magical act of hunting and not as the object of hunting (the actual hunting is done for him by the hunter depicted on the wall). Thus ancient man was able to treat the picture and the ritual-magical (in a broader sense, mimetic) activity as artistic activity. The aesthetic view of the world was born and grew gradually in the process of practice (hunting and gathering) and ritual-magical activity (duplicating the production practice). The aesthetic attitude then branched off to become a distinct type of relationship which led to a separation of art from ritual-magical mimetic (imitative) activity.¹

The evolution of helpless practical activity into magical-mimetic (which

helped the hunter's practice) and further into mythological and then properly artistic activity took a long historical period to accomplish. At first the primitive man struck the object he identified with the animal with his spear. Then the object (stone, the space on the wall) was given the shape of the animal (the first sculpted or drawn mimetic-magical representation). Now the ritual-magical blows were delivered on the magical realia, i.e. the mimetic picture identified with the animal in man's mind. Sometimes the body of the animal represented bore the traces not only of blows ("signs of the wound") but also had missile weapons sticking from it, weapons which took much time and effort to make and were highly valued. These magical blows were a mental rehearsal of the hunt. Then real blows began to be combined with and eventually were replaced by their mimetic denotation. The traps and weapons came to be depicted on the wall next to the picture of the animal. Now the picture of the animal was accompanied by the picture of arrows flying at it or an enclosure into which the animal is chased. Thus, in the Lascaux cave in France there is a picture of a horse surrounded by hachure (vertical strokes joined by a winding line indicating a cross beam). This is a mimetic picture of a fence guiding the animal towards his trap (dots and crossing lines). The scene of trapping an animal with the use of trapping devices has some of the animals marked by the weapons they are hunted with (a horse by an arrow, a bison by a picture of several spears).

Then comes another important step in the evolution of the magical-mimetic picture into a symbolic and artistic one. The bison in the Altamira cave stands motionless and tense. Above his body are five parallel lines joined by a cross line. Here the picture for the first time ceases to be imitative-naturalistic and acquires a symbolic character. We see not a magical realia which depicts and magically duplicates the process of hunting but its symbolic depiction. The new element that appears here is the convention of representation, marking a step towards imagery. There appears the sign (symbol) possessing a new semantics (not a magic realia as the second reality, but a conscious depiction of the world as a form of mastering it spiritually, as a consolidation of the sphere of freedom gained from nature and man's self-assertion in the world). At the next stage the semantics expands and the meaning of the sign-symbol expands. It changes from the symbol of a weapon and of hunting and catching the animal into a sign-symbol of mastery over the object in general, the symbol of freedom with regard to the phenomena of the world. Thus the "engraved" picture scratched on a bone plate from Istoritzy shows a crawling woman followed by a crawling man. A toothed sign scratched on the

woman's thigh symbolises the paleolithic weapon, the spear. The hunting weapon is presented, not in its direct meaning, and not as imitative-magical realia (a lethal weapon for killing the animal) but as a symbol of mastery, a symbol of freedom.

The magical, as opposed to artistic features of paleolithic drawings are seen in the fact that the drawing is not isolated from its environment (there is no framing or limits to the space of the drawing) and that the primitive draughtsman had no qualms about superimposing his own drawing on that of his predecessor without troubling to coat it over, chip or rub it away. Art scholars use the term palimpsest to refer to the process of putting one drawing upon another on the analogy with medieval manuscripts in which texts were written on slightly impaired previous texts. Palimpsest is often found in cliff drawings. The drawings in the Lascaux cave and on the Tassili-n-Ajjer Plateau (Algeria) have palimpsests with ten and more layers put at various times. This proves that the drawings were not regarded as works of art which are of their nature eternal. They were seen as magical realia: one generation ritually killed an animal and the following generation ignored it to draw a new one in order to "hunt" it.

Drawing was a cultural phenomenon opposing nature, but as yet hardly isolated from it, i.e. it fully reflected the historical state of man and his place in the world. How did a magical realia evolve into an artistic image? I have already commented on the evolution of the perception of a magical drawing by later generations (generations that came much later, for the closer generations, as we have seen, ignored the earlier drawings to make new ones on top of them) who came to perceive it as an artistic product. Let me now consider what preceded, accompanied and caused the process of transformation of the world depicted into an aesthetic world. The aesthetic world was born out of the utilitarian world which man created in the process of his economic activity, i.e. hunting, and out of the utilitarian-spiritual world which man created in the process of magical rituals in the course of which he mentally acted out, prepared and "rehearsed" the hunt and even perhaps mentally carried it out. Man first gets the opportunity to look at himself and the world aesthetically when he is able to regard the depicted hunting scene, in which he is himself involved, and the ritual-magical actions duplicating the hunt in a disinterested way, i.e. without a direct utilitarian economic concern and without the ritual-magical attitude to what is taking place. The possibility of a detached attitude enabled man to be disinterested and to perceive the process of hunting not as an act designed to satisfy his hunger but as a

universally significant act essential for mankind's existence. Such an aesthetic attitude consolidated a relatively high level of mastery of the world and provided man with value orientation.

That moment, in a certain sense, marks the birth of art proper, the beginning of artistic activity which proceeds from an aesthetic attitude to the world and records its highest historical achievements. The magical-mimetic attitude to the world is, historically, a mediating link between the bedrock foundations of the cultural process, i.e. the utilitarian-practical attitude, and the aesthetic attitude. At the same time the ritual-magical activity, growing out of the utilitarian-practical activity and developing as an aid to it foreshadows and anticipates not only the aesthetic attitude but also the religious feeling. There are fundamental differences between these four types of activity (utilitarian, magical, religious and aesthetic), their products and the relations they involve. Primitive man's utilitarian attitude had for its object natural phenomena (animal, for example). That object was consumed and disappeared in the process of consumption.

The object of the ritual-magical attitude was a cultural phenomenon (a cliff drawing of an animal or a stone which, even if unprocessed, was a phenomenon of culture, i.e. was involved in cultural circulation, existed in the cultural context, had a special denotation and was different from other stones). But the essence of the ritual-magical attitude was precisely that it sought to make a phenomenon of culture (for example, the picture of an animal) as similar as possible to its natural prototype and identified the cultural phenomenon (magical realia) with that prototype. The magical realia (drawing of an animal) was perceived by the primitive man as a natural phenomenon, as an object of the hunt. Magical realia were perceived not as images of reality, not as signs standing for objects but as reality itself, as natural objects, as their duplication.

The attitude to magical realia was mental-practical. The animal on the cave wall was hunted. Blows were delivered at it and that constituted the mental-practical variant of a real hunt, its "rehearsal", duplication, anticipation, preparation and implementation. All that remained to do to solve the taxing and hazardous practical task was to duplicate its "solution" given in a magical ritual.

The magical realia "captured the instant" of hunting and made it eternal. That instant lasted longer than an age so as to assume universal human relevance and in later times was perceived as art, and became an aesthetic object.

The first objects of man's aesthetic attitude are the products of his work and

creative activity. Well-made work implements and cliff drawings (magical realia), which were mental instruments of work (hunting), provide the first objects of the aesthetic feeling. That feeling arises as soon as the ritual-magical aspect of the cliff drawing recedes into the background, as soon as it ceases to be a target for a ritual-magical thrust with a spear. The drawing becomes a symbol of the real object and ceases to be perceived by the primitive man as another form of reality, as a duplication of the animal. In his cliff drawings (magic realia) man created another world of nature which, through colossal mental effort, he made his own and humanised, at least for the duration of the ritual. But that *other world of nature* turned out to be *a world of other nature*, i.e. culture. The magical attitude turned into aesthetic attitude and a magical realia into *an artistic image*.

The aesthetic attitude spread from the first art works to the entire man-made world and from it gradually to nature. The aesthetic attitude to nature is a later cultural act of man prepared and made possible by art. Just as Turner "created" the beauty of London fogs, so art images sharpened the aesthetic feeling, "created" the human eye capable of appreciating the beauty of a landscape (the latter appears in art relatively late and flowers only in the Renaissance and the following epochs). Just as musical sound formed the musical ear, so art as a whole gave birth to, sharpened and shaped an aesthetic attitude to the world. In primitive society the prime conditions of that process were: 1) *labour*, which made man perform magical-mimetic rituals for his practical economic purposes; and 2) *leisure*, which appeared after early economic advances enabling man to devote time to making drawings. The latter kind of activity called for a good deal of skill and time. Meanwhile primitive man was the busiest intelligent creature in the world. All his time was devoted to reproducing himself (getting food, clothing and shelter). The low level of the productive forces made it impossible to create stocks of food. It was only after he had reached a certain social and economic level that man could afford to devote part of his time to making cliff drawings. The formation of a relatively large and united social group, long precluded by the volatile temper of Neanderthal man who did not have adequate psychic inhibitive mechanisms to control his nervous impulses, provided the primitive *homo sapiens* with a relatively high level of social organization. The discovery and invention of new weapons, means and skills of hunting, which became a better organized collective effort, made it possible to hunt large animals. That in turn made possible the creation of stocks of food and released time, providing man with "leisure". Man used that "leisure"

to improve himself, to acquire new powerful forces in creative and economic (hunting) activity. That made possible the appearance of cliff drawings, which initially were magical realia and later works of art.

Henri Breuil, an authority on primitive art, noted the link between the appearance of early cliff drawings and the beginning of big animal hunting. The connection between availability of stocks of food and the hunting of large animals and the start of the making of drawings is evidenced by such facts as the discovery of large amounts of animal bones on late paleolithic sites (for example, the bones of more than 900 mammoths were found near Předměstí, Moravia, of some 9,000 horses in Somotré, France, and of about a thousand bisons at Amvrosiyevka, the Ukraine). These large animals were made the objects of magical-mimetic representation. For the hunting of large animals was the most efficient form of hunting as well as being the most challenging, dangerous and desirable. All this made man resort to ritual magical acts meant to contribute to the successful and safe outcome of such a hard, dangerous and coveted undertaking as, say, the hunting of a mammoth. The dangerous hunt enriched man's memory with vivid and exciting impressions, observations of the animal's appearance, ways and anatomy. Such observations, improved the accuracy and skill with which the magical-mimetic drawings were executed. The evolution of the magical-ritual drawing into artistic drawing in the proper sense (although sometimes preserving some ritual aspects in their look and purpose) is linked with the transition from imitation of the natural object to stylization that accented certain aspects of the object being portrayed. Thus, all the paleolithic "Venuses" (female statuettes) found on the territories of France, Italy, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR have inordinately large breasts, stomachs and thighs while facial features are absent and the feet and hands are either absent or blurred. These depictions glorify the woman's child-bearing capacity while the individual traits are irrelevant and unexpressed. This constitutes stylization. The stylization is not a mimetic quality (important for the ritualistic-magical stage in the development of representational activity) but an artistic quality (the representation includes a conscious and articulated aesthetic attitude and a certain subjective canon).

The primitive artist was not only anonymous, he was also impersonal expressing as he did not himself but the whole of his tribe. Art was conservative and canonical in character. When a paleolithic artist drew an animal on a cliff he drew a real animal. To him, the world of the imagination and art was not yet a separate province distinct from empirically perceived

reality. He did not yet oppose or distinguish these provinces, but saw one as a direct extension of the other. Wishing to take material possession of the animal (to kill and eat it) the artist who made a ritualistic-magical drawing of the animal actually mastered it mentally, cognized it and recorded the results of his cognition. That created an objective possibility for later perception of the magical realia as an artistic image and for passing from the ritual-mimetic activity to artistic activity proper. But the artistic form of activity, which already included an aesthetic attitude to the world, was not initially art in the strict sense of the word, rather, it was its folklore pre-history, a mythological proto-form. It was only when the individual element emerged and invaded artistic activity that art assumed its proper form.

Artistic Culture Was Born Many Times

The aphorism "to live means to die" is as true as the idea that "man is being born all his life (until one dies)". The world's jurists cannot agree on the question at what moment abortion becomes murder. That juridical snag reflects the difficulty of understanding the dialectics of birth which is not a one-act process. The same type of difficulty, the same theoretical problem is encountered by the student who sets out to establish the moment of the birth of art. In fact, the task of dating the origin of art is even more challenging: that process is hard to observe owing to the distance of time and lack of reliable data on some important aspects. Besides, whereas a living creature is born once, art is born many times. Thus, it is born once as a text capable of being perceived as art and then is born again many times in the process of perception. This applies to the birth of the first text in history and to the birth of every work of art.

That art is born many times is due not only to the change of perceptions from epoch to epoch, but also due to the fact that artistic culture was born at different times in different geographical regions (Africa, the Middle East, the Far East, Western Europe, Central Asia, Northern America, Oceania, Australia, etc.): different kinds of art and types of artistic activity appeared at different times and in different areas; primitive ritual-mimetic activity began to be regarded as artistic and not magical activity at different times in different regions. It was only in modern times that the products of primitive man's artistic activity acquired universal artistic value and gained the status of world values in human consciousness. The birth of thinking in images does not end the process of the birth of art, for the first stage in the development of

that thinking is impersonal.

That is folklore. It is only on the basis of folklore and its arsenal of skills, knowhow and thought that art proper is born, i.e. not a collective but an individual and later professional form of activity. The individuality of artistic thinking followed by professionalization and the isolation of artistic activity as a distinct type of activity reflecting the division of labour in society and the isolation of intellectual activity – all these are stages in the birth of art. The early stages in the evolution of mimetic activity can be dated as follows:

In the late paleolithic period: engravings on bones and stone and early decorations appear in Europe in the Chatelperronian period (c 35th millennium B.C.);

The Aurignacian period (c 30th millennium B.C.) – the first pictures engraved and painted on stone tablets;

The Gravettian period (c 25th millennium B.C.) – plates with engraved and painted pictures on cave walls;

The Solutrean period (c 18th millennium B.C.) – engraved or painted pictures on stone in caves;

The Madeleine period (c 15th millennium B.C.) – drawings and petroglyphics in caves, decorative objects, decorations and ornaments on objects;

The Mesolithic period – shingles with schematic signs;

The Neolithic period – decorative ceramics, female statuettes, figures of animals. Cliff drawings appear in Northern Africa and the Sahara in the 8th millennium B.C., in Southern Africa in the 7th millennium B.C., and in Australia in the 4th millennium B.C.

So far, in speaking about the origin of art we have mainly drawn our examples from the visual representational activity which was the forerunner of the graphic arts and sculpture. But a similar process went on in verbal activity. The oldest forms of magic – charms, incantations, imprecations, lamentations – were verbal forms of magic. That is, the word did not precede the deed, it was a deed.

To utter a charm or an imprecation was the same as to perform the act. To curse meant to kill, not verbally but really. Verbal action became aphoristically polished and replete with connotations, semantically concentrated and taut to achieve the maximum magical effectiveness, formal coherence and perfection, a semantic validity equal to a real act. All this combined to lend verbal magic (incantations, charms, imprecations, etc.) such a high degree of perfection that later it would rightly be perceived as a highly artistic form, although it was born not in order to perform artistic tasks but to

be a mental aid in meeting the overwhelming odds and hazards of daily life (fighting the enemy, hunting animals, and keeping off wounds, disease and death by means of charms, etc.).

Magical realia begin to acquire the qualities of art as soon as the verbal, suggestive, inherently imperative and inevitably exclamatory form of verbal magic is penetrated by descriptive and narrative (epic) elements, as soon as the suggestive function recedes into the background, and the function of verbal description and interpretation (cognizing) of the world and of shaping a socialized man come to the fore. Folklore, mythology and the epic are born from magical realia. They in turn provide the intellectual material, an arsenal of images, a repository of habits and experience of artistic thinking which gradually acquires individual and professional features. They made possible the emergence of literature proper. Homer and his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are yet works of oral verbal art, but an art that is epic, personal and professionally distinct from other forms of social activity (being a rhapsod is in a certain sense a profession).

The next stage in the birth of literature was the appearance of written forms. Writing causes a veritable revolution in verbal art which completely sheds its mimetic-imitative qualities, develops the technique of dialogue (as an answer to the need to include in the text the interlocutor lost with the disappearance of oral verbal art) before drama in its own right is born. Dialogue sharpens polar oppositions and opens the floodgates for the interrogative intonation (notably in tragedy). All this puts a sharper focus on personal positions (dialogue – argument – upholding "one's own" drastically opposite point of view). The emergence of a marked individual attitude in culture prompted by its growing dialogical character is backed up by the social and economic need for personalized attitudes in life.

In literature all this engenders a special form of sharply individualized thinking reflecting a cultural and socio-economic need. So lyrical forms appear.

The birth of these main forms would seem to complete the birth of literature. In fact, however, the birth of literature has continued and continues in modern times. For example, it was not until the 19th century that a literary work acquired its own style that could not be duplicated in other works and it became possible to convey not only the chain of events but also the stream of consciousness. The inner world of man, and not only his consciousness but also the subconsciousness become the object of psychological scrutiny in literature. There you have an endless chain of the births of literature as a

verbal form of artistic activity.

Art, unlike life, is born many times. It is born many times in ontogenesis and phylogenesis. Rembrandt's paintings, born at the end of the Renaissance, did not exist for world art for 200 years and then got a new lease of life in modern times when they acquired worldwide value. Roman culture experienced a second birth in the Classical period. Cliff drawing and primitive cave sculptures produced in the paleolithic period as ritual and mythological cultural entities become part of mankind's artistic heritage in modern times. But art is born many times not only in ontogenetic terms. In phylogenesis, too, it is not born in one instant and indeed we are witnessing its continuing birth. While theatre has its roots in ancient rituals, the literary basis of theatre (dramaturgy) was born from and on the basis of epics during the transition from the oral to written forms of literature. The transition to the written tradition involved the loss of direct communication between the author-performer (rhapsod, narrator of folk tales, *akyn*, etc.) and his audience. The absence of direct contact prompted the need to lay out, in a scholarly discourse, all the arguments anticipating the possible questions and objections, thus giving rise to the science of logic and spontaneous dialectics of thought. On the other hand, the artistic texts recorded in writing were in need of a dialogue element which attained its final form in drama.

Art, born as cliff drawings and functionally geared to ritual-magical and not artistic tasks, was born many times as a distinct type of artistic activity. To begin with, the cliff drawings themselves later acquired artistic value for primitive man. That happened as soon as the ritual-magical meaning of these drawings receded into the background. Perhaps these drawings were first seen as art by a woman captive from an alien tribe living in a new social group and unfamiliar with its rituals. Later it was seen in that way by the members of her new tribe. And many thousands of years later the same cliff drawings were recognized as universally relevant artistic values, as works of art. In time the artist began to draw not for ritual or magical purposes, not in order to confer a second form of being on the animal, not to influence nature, but for purely artistic purposes, in order to influence man. And then art was born anew as *bona fide* artistic activity. However, for a long time painting was literary in the sense that it expressed its message by telling a story in a series of flat pictures relating events in their sequence. The art of the Renaissance discovered the perspective and broke the flatness to make the artist's vision three-dimensional. Artistic messages came to be expressed not through the relative sizes of the figures, but by arranging them in a certain way. Painting

attained a new level of accuracy in depicting reality, and that was its new birth. The 19th century saw the birth of photography which could perform many of the documentary and memorial-representational functions of painting and drawing. Impressionists began to present not a literary narrative, but the concrete sensuous perception of reality conveying through colour and light their personal vision. In this way painting finally dissociated itself historically and aesthetically from literature and drawing. Each new historical and aesthetic stage in the development of painting was its new birth. In the same way, music was born many times (evolving from accompaniment to an epic narrative into the musical form proper, and then into opera, chamber, symphony music, etc.).

The birth of arts continues before our eyes. The 19th century saw the emergence of art photography, and the 20th century of the cinema and television. The multiple birth of art became possible because 1) man developed new artistic needs which could not be met without the appearance of new forms of art; and 2) the earlier established forms and varieties of art which have withstood the test of time did not oppose the new-born arts, did not strangle them by competition (age-old theatre did not destroy young cinema as indeed the latter does not destroy theatre but merely makes it adapt itself taking into account the social functioning of the new art).

Art acquired its structure and forms of social functioning over a historically extended period and by phases, and the same is true of the emergence and satisfaction of new artistic demands. First utilitarian activity gave rise to ritual-magical impersonal mimetic activity designed to assist it. Its products were magical realia, imperative, intonational-exclamatory, suggestive and imitative forms of recording and duplicating reality. Then magical activity became removed from direct practical tasks, the products of that activity were found to have universal human messages and meanings and descriptive narrative elements were introduced, all of which gave rise to artistic activity proper in its impersonal form (mythology, folklore forms). Then the personal element appeared leading to the birth of written forms of literature (collective experience as enshrined in a myth could easily be preserved by the collective in oral form, but the personal art experience of a professional artist had to be recorded in a written text that stood out clearly from nature (primitive forms of framing pictures, pedestals for statues, etc.). Such was the complex and phased birth of art.

¹ The theory of mimesis is theoretical anachronism that interprets the atavistic elements in artistic culture. The conception of Aristotle and his Greek predecessors concerning the mimetic character of art is in fact a belated theoretical interpretation of the ritual-magical act at a historical juncture when only archaic survivals of it remained in antique culture which was dominated by art proper, although the mimetic element would long preserve its significance (notable in painting and sculpture).

AESTHETICS: THE THEORETICAL HISTORY OF ART

The Science of the Process of Art

LAWS OF THE DYNAMICS OF THE ART PROCESS

Interactions in Art

Interactions in art are diverse influences of one or a group of art phenomena on another phenomenon or a whole group of phenomena. There are interactions between elements of art as an evolving system.

Everything is intertwined in the art process; you cannot encounter any single type of influence in its pure form. But the scholarly approach demands that a *typology* of artistic interactions be given. These interactions have two "voices", i.e. the "passive" (the artist is influenced) and the "active" (the artist exerts influence); two *classes*: interactions within one art (for example in literature or cinema) and interactions between arts (theatre influences the graphic arts, music influences cinema and cinema influences literature and television). The interactions between arts could be likened to cross-pollination of flowers: there occur the most amazing similarities of artistic thinking between poet and artist, novelist and musician who may share the overall world view and aesthetic attitudes towards the world (Blok and Vrubel, Ghe and Tolstoy, Levitan and Chekhov).

Art interactions can be on different levels: at the level of individual works, individual artists, art trends, currents and schools and, finally, at the level of entire art periods. An example of interaction at the level of trends is offered by the influence of Sentimentalism on the emergence of Romantic art, and at the level of art periods by the influence of antique Greek art on that of the Renaissance and of Roman art on Classicism.

As to their character, interactions within art can be *strong* and *weak*. A literary story has it that a famous writer remarked when told that a critic had suggested that he was following the Dickens tradition. "It seems there is yet another writer I should read." It may seem paradoxical but it is possible that both the writer and the critic were right. An artist can be influenced by a predecessor whose work he does not know. Not infrequently it happens that a great artist becomes dissolved as it were in the world artistic process and thus exerts an all-embracing influence on its development. Needless to say, such "dissolution" does not belittle the significance of the genius and his work. Speaking in the language of physics, these are weak interactions; they have universal breadth and deep penetration into the thick of the most complex

processes. A "gravitational field" is created into which any artist of the following period is inevitably drawn whether he shuns or is attracted to his great predecessor, rejects his artistic credo or continues his traditions. Fyodor Dostoyevsky was an example of a genius who dissolved himself in the world literary process; his work went a long way to shape the general literary situation in the 20th century. Maxim Gorky shunned Dostoyevsky, Kafka was drawn to him and Leonov as a writer developed within the Dostoyevskian tradition.

Such artistic interaction involves not direct influence of a great predecessor's work on one or other of the succeeding generations of artists, but the creation of an artistic field within whose range of influence they are inevitably drawn. Such influence may be less noticeable but it is more effective. Albert Camus and Bertolt Brecht reacted to the influence of the artistic field created by Dostoyevsky, one of the most philosophical and moralistic writers of the world, in different ways and within their own frames of reference but in some ways similarly. Their intellectual art can be traced to Dostoyevsky's artistic principles. Brecht and Camus write concept plays and concept novels. But while Camus emphasises the philosophical and moral problems and puts the individual at the centre of his thinking, Brecht turns to philosophical-political themes and focuses on the people and the relationship between the individual and the people.

Interactions can be of two kinds: *individual* and *general*. For example, Dostoyevsky does not enter the "individual", "private", "personal" tradition of Brecht but has influenced him as a "general" tradition (weak interaction), as an artistic summit that is the heritage of all literature. The "individual" tradition has to do with direct influence of a writer on his successor (strong interaction). Interactions in art are further divided into types.

The first type is *innovatory continuation of the tradition*.

The second type is *rejection* when the artist reacts negatively to his predecessor's work, so that the artistic conceptions of their works are opposite while the expressive means used and artistic manners may be similar. Such interaction is based on a love-hate relationship between art principles.

The third type is *borrowing*, the transposing of elements of one artistic system (narrative scheme, circumstances, characters and composition) into another.

The features of the source can be discerned in the new work. But the borrowed elements are blended with new colouring, with imperceptibly changed artistic rhythm, and a different treatment of characters.

The fourth type of interaction within art is close to borrowing and may be

termed *influence* when an artist uses *some elements of his predecessor's artistic experience*. In that instance, the stylistic qualities of the original are not preserved and the influence may crop up in the most unexpected guises.

The fifth type is *imitation*, copying of the main stylistic traits or form of the source, the manner of the predecessor. The imitator draws on the source to a greater degree than the borrower, the latter copying elements of the source and the former its very structure.

The sixth type is *parody*, an imitation exaggerating the traits of the original and expressing a mocking attitude to some characters and ideas of the source while in general revering and admiring its qualities. Such is the interaction between Pushkin's *Duke Nulin* and Shakespeare's *Lucretia*, and *Don Quixote* by Cervantes and the chivalry novel.

The seventh type is aping, non-creative imitation marked by a small degree of processing, slavish copying and decreased artistic standards compared to the original. The lowest stage of aping is *plagiarism*, i.e. complete artistic impotence, interaction with zero creative potential verging on simple literary theft.

The eighth type is *competition*. The artist seems to regard his predecessor as a rival, learning from him in some ways and rejecting him in other ways being aware of his difference and seeking to surpass him artistically. Such was the attitude of Lermontov to Byron.

The ninth type is *concentration* in which a major artist integrates and absorbs the work of a whole galaxy of his predecessors and contemporaries. Many of them are interesting for posterity not in their intrinsic artistic merit but rather in the cultural and historical context since everything that is of value in their work has been absorbed by the work of a great artist whose masterpieces have intransient value. In Russia such a genius was Pushkin, in Italy, Dante, in Germany, Goethe and in England, Shakespeare.

The tenth type of interaction within art is a process opposite to concentration, i.e. the *dissolution* of the work of a major writer in the subsequent artistic process, without his own work losing its intrinsic aesthetic value.

Interactions within art can be furthermore *international* and *intranational*.

International interactions are in turn subdivided into intra-regional (for example, the interaction between Slavic literatures) and inter-regional (for example, interaction between the regions of Slavic and Romance literatures).

International interactions in art can be on a personal level (for example, Pushkin and Mickiewicz), at the level of different arts (for example, Russo-Polish literary ties) and the entire national art cultures (Japanese artistic

culture influenced European painting in the late 19th and early 20th centuries).

Global international interactions at the level of art periods exert a particularly profound influence on mankind's artistic culture. The artistic discoveries of one nation influence the artistic culture of many other nations. International artistic interactions usually have an epicentre (Greece in the period of antiquity, Italy in the period of Renaissance, France in the period of Classicism).

The integrity of mankind's social and historical development, in spite of the relative autonomy of art, accounts for common features in the artistic consciousness of different peoples and provides the basis for the interactions between the arts of different nations.

Repetition of the Unrepeatable (Typology of Coincidences in Art)

How does one account for the fact that the art of different peoples reveals common and similar features? For the comparativists (the adherents of the comparative-historical method of literary study) the main vehicles of the universal human element in artistic thought were the so-called "vagrant plots". But they cannot explain all the coincidences in the arts of different peoples.

Often one is confronted with a similarity of art phenomena that cannot be put down to the direct cultural influence of one nation on another. One thinks of the Stone Garden, that remarkable work of Japanese art. Created in the 13th century it is linked with Zen-Buddhism and contains profound philosophical images that overlap with the ideas and images of the Western civilization. The Stone Garden is a space covered with coarse white sand amid which are scattered moss-grown islets and fancy-shaped boulders. Nature in its creations cannot match this harmonious chaos and chaotic harmony.

The breath of man on the stone does not prevent it from being pristine and natural. The Stone Garden is reminiscent, not of the trimmed Versailles gardens, but rather of a later product of French culture, existentialism which has proclaimed that life is absurd and has equated the world with Inanity. The Stone Garden is an imaginative model of the cosmos. Stones in the sand are "islets in the ocean of eternity, or Inanity" as the makers of the garden themselves proclaimed. Different circumstances which were in both cases linked to the historical situation which appeared to contemporaries to be a dead end produced an artistic embodiment of the idea of the absurd world.

The Japanese "philosophical garden" has 15 stones, but they are so skilfully arranged that from whatever point you look, you see 12 or 13, at best 14. Here we have a model of the Universe, and the fact that we never see all the stones is a metaphoric way of saying that the world can never be understood in all its fullness and infinity. The fifteenth stone anticipates, in the form of an image, the Kantian idea of "the thing in itself".

There is no question of attributing such cultural "intersections" to mutual influence of national artistic traditions. However, all the instances of comparable or similar elements in the art of different peoples lend themselves to scientific classification.

The first type of similarity arises due to the *immediate similarities of the historical circumstances of different peoples*. The art of different peoples passes through similar stages of evolution. The second type of similarity is due to *dialectics whereby art develops in a spiral*. The phenomena at a point situated on a higher turn of the spiral repeat, on a new basis, the essential features of the preceding turn or stage of development. Thus, Renaissance art repeated on a new basis the features of ancient Greek art, and classicism has some features of Roman art; the rationalistic Enlightenment of Lessing's dramas are repeated in the intellectual, epic dramas of Brecht, etc.

The third, most complex and least studied type of recurrence of artistic phenomena is attributed to the existence of *cycles in the development of artistic culture*. Nutsubidze, a Georgian scholar, advanced a fruitful theory about the existence of an Eastern Renaissance which predated the Western one and produced a rich and original crop of art works. A departure from the Eurocentric conception makes it possible to include within the purview of the history and theory of art not only Western but also the Eastern cycle of art development and to find similar features and correspondences at different stretches of these cycles. Different cycles of development repeat in an original way the spirals of the artistic process. Drawing on the experience not only of Europe, but also America, Africa, Asia and Oceania would make scholars trace parallel historical movement of the different branches of artistic culture and prompt them to look for common patterns in these dissimilar but in the final count comparable processes.

Mankind deals with a world that is one, with a single though diverse material environment and common social and economic processes. That provides the basis for all the human universals, intersections, interactions and international influences that are revealed when the arts of different nations are compared. At the same time the original social-historic and artistic experience of various

nations results in an original national refraction of artistic influences emanating from other nations and accounts for specific forms in which common features are manifested.

Progress in Art

The development of art is complex and does not follow a straight line. Does this mean simply change or is there progress in art? One must first say that progress in art should be understood not as a measure of the genius possessed by artists but as something different, as the improvement and rise in the level of imaginative thinking.

The interpretation of art as a process encounters an apparent contradiction: on the one hand every stage in the development of art is a step in the upward movement of imaginative thinking, but on the other hand what is historically higher is not necessarily higher in artistic terms. Every stage in the development of art is not only relatively significant as preparation and transition to a higher stage. It also possesses intrinsic value and uniqueness. Although its path is tortuous, art on the whole develops in an *ascending* line. In other words, in spite of all the contradictions and deviations art in general is marked by increasingly complex, aesthetically and existentially rich artistic thought. Realism, for example, raised the level of artistic thinking and deepened the artist's insight into life by discovering psychological analysis, learning to reveal the "dialectics of the soul" and reflecting the aesthetic richness of the world in aesthetically complex images.

The history of aesthetics has seen many eschatological-aesthetic Utopias predicting the death of art. They go back to Plato. His pessimistic view of art was echoed by Schiller in some of his pronouncements. It is also found in the early writings of Fichte and Schlegel. Aesthetic eschatology gets the most vivid and complete expression in Hegel's theory about "the end of art" and the advent of a kingdom of pure spirituality unburdened by material form. All the aesthetic conceptions that prophesied the death of art underrated its cognitive role and noted its imperfections compared to philosophy and religion.

The Utopias proclaiming "the end of art" are clearly erroneous. Art is capable of progress. Moreover, progress is the law of the artistic process. Engels believed that future drama would blend Shakespeare's liveliness and effectiveness with awareness of the meaning of history. The art process has an ascending progressive character. The idea of progress in art is developed in

Lenin's articles about Tolstoy which stress that the work of the great Russian writer marked a step forward in the development of human art in the new historical period.

Progress in the history of art consists not only in reflecting new and higher forms of the life of mankind, and new problems and ideas but also in the improvement and the rising level of artistic thinking from period to period.

The Intransient Character of Artistic Values

The ancients used to say that everything passes. But you cannot say of a great work of art that it too will pass. It has intransient value. The forms of artistic thinking engendered by the concrete circumstances of a particular period cannot be repeated. The antique world, "the normal childhood" of mankind, produced a remarkable art which in a sense has remained a norm and unattainable model.

The fascination of ancient Greek art does not contradict the undeveloped kind of society from which it grew. That fascination derives from the fact the immature social conditions which produced that art can never be repeated.

The early forms of artistic thinking in a period that did not know the printing press, gunpowder and other products of the modern civilization can never be repeated.

Great artistic images preserve their intrinsic value for mankind over many centuries while the greatest of scientific discoveries of the past represent just an element, an aspect of modern science. Thus, while Newtonian physics is incorporated as an aspect in the physics of Einstein Homer is not dissolved in Dante or Shakespeare who in turn are not made irrelevant by Tolstoy or Dostoyevsky. Of course, not everything in art, and not all art, is eternal. The ability to tell between appearance and reality, to sift off the essential elements in a phenomenon from the transient and superficial constitute the great gift of the true artist whose work is immortal for precisely that reason.

Art turns the most ordinary of objects into historical ones. While history, being a science, reveals the process through essential facts, art is capable of putting inessential objects into the characteristic human context of the period making them universally relevant. Why does that happen? Before including an object of reality in its system of images, art processes it: the object is no longer simply an object of reality but an object reworked in keeping with the laws of beauty which confers universal significance on it. Art always treats an

object aesthetically, i.e. in terms of its value for mankind, and herein lies the intransient value of the masterpieces of art.

AESTHETICS: THE THEORETICAL HISTORY OF ART

The Science of the Process of Art

THE LAWS OF HISTORICAL STAGES AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE ART PROCESS

The Trend as an Artistic Concept

The art work is the most authentic and tangible reality in art. But a profound study of art is called upon to reveal not only the originality but also the qualities that the work shares with the work of other artists belonging to the same typological order, i.e. to reveal the mechanism that links that particular artist to a certain artistic school, current or trend.

The trend is a major category in the dialectics of art development. The trend manifests itself both through a body of work implementing certain declarations and through programmatic theoretical manifestoes. Sometimes the body of work programmatically oriented towards a new mode of artistic thinking is created within the context of the preceding school. For example, in the first quarter of the 19th century Russian literature was oriented on romanticism developed in the intellectual framework created by classicism. The opponents of a moribund trend often struggle not so much against its leading exponents as against the theories and manifestoes and against petty imitators. Subsequently polemics becomes directed against the entire trend (thus, Belinsky inveighs heavily against classicism as a whole). Theorists often come under the spell of a previous attitude to a given trend. In such instances the main target of their criticism is the dogmatized theory of the trend being dismantled.

The essence of an art trend is that it expresses the invariant (the unchanged entity) of the artistic conception of the individual and the world. An art trend is an objectivized method, a mode of artistic thinking which manifests itself in a certain type of artistic verity. The trend expresses the ideological aspects of the art process that have to do with world view. As an aesthetic category of the art process the trend reflects the real historical results of the interaction between tradition and innovation.

The artistic concept is expressed through a system of ideas fused with the system of plastic images that have a generalized meaning and impact. The main elements of the world reflected by art determine the historical type of structure given to artistic works and the essence of the artistic conception of the world. There are three main elements:

The individual: the conscious and the subconscious of the individual, his intuition, drives and passions, thoughts and feelings, goals and aspirations, ambitions and will, role "masks" and character.

Society: the social group and milieu, political party and class, nation and people, society and state, humanity.

Nature: the natural environment, "the man-made environment", and outer space which, when it becomes the object of art, inevitably raises the higher philosophical problems of being.

Art reflects how each of these elements of the world interacts with the individual, which accounts for a number of layers in a work of art: 1) man's inner interaction with himself; 2) man's communication with other men; 3) the social aspects of man's communications and relations; 4) the relation of the individual to the human race as a whole; 5) the natural environment of the individual; 6) "the second nature", the material culture surrounding the individual; 7) the individual's attitude to spiritual culture; 8) man and outer space. The artistic concept of the world expressed in the works of a given trend is realized in a typological model of the world which depends on the hierarchy of layers, i.e. which layer is dominant; in what sequence in relation to the dominant layer the other layers are arranged; which layers are absent in the structure of a work; how each of the layers present is treated.

In addition to the plastic model of ideas an artistic conception of the world includes non-plastic ideas (philosophical, political, moral, etc.).

Each time a unique typological artistic structure is formed which is varied in different currents and schools and in different works belonging to the given trend. But the basic framework of the structure remains and the art trend is an invariant (stable, constant element) of the artistic conception of the world.

To sum up then. A trend as a category of the artistic process emerges within the system of concrete works revealing the same typological model and is determined by *the type of the artistic conception of the world* and the invariant artistically interpreted state of the world. A change of artistic trends is the process of the change of the artistic conception of the world manifested through a change of the structural type of works of art. Every historical period produces its own dominant trend.

Medieval art was preoccupied with God and interpreted the Universe in relation to man. That trend was carried on by Dante whose artistic conception focused on the cosmos. *The Divine Comedy* offers a structure of the cosmos and assigns places in it to man and society (the dominant layer is the eighth one). Renaissance placed the self-aware individual at the centre of the cosmos (the

first layer predominates).

Classicism centred on the state to which man is subordinate (the third layer, i.e. the state, is dominant).

Romanticism was preoccupied with the inner world of the individual in his relationship with nature (the dominant layer elements are layer one, i.e. social consciousness, and layer five, i.e. the nature surrounding the individual).

Realism put at the centre of its works man and the nation, the individual and society (the dominant elements are layer one and partly layer three, i.e. the people and society).

In socialist realism the individual "is a droplet flowing with the masses" in "the iron flood" of history. Man as conditioned by history and at the same time as making history together with the people is the focal problem of socialist realism (the dominant element is layer three).

Thus leading aesthetic trends succeeded each other over history, and the typological structure of works of art and the artistic conception of the world contained in them changed.

One can now formulate the universal law of art's existence as a process. *Art as a process is a developing system of artistic interactions (of different levels, kinds and types) progressing towards a higher type of artistic thought through historical succession of trends while preserving the intransient earlier values.*

A correct grasp of the nature of a trend makes it possible to keep within one's purview the whole complexity of the development of art in the past and present: *the artistic process does not completely coincide with the main trend of the historical period, it is richer than its dominant trend.* A good deal in the artistic process is, as it were, in the melting pot, and the trend as a regularity of development pinpoints only those elements that have established themselves.

Art Periods and Trends in the Past

In the past the trend as a rule coincided with the art period. That ceased to be the case only in the late 19th century owing to the intensity of the art process and the pitched ideological and aesthetic battles waged within it. Let us consider the main art trends of the past which largely coincided with periods in the development of art. Scholars have not achieved unanimity on that problem. For example, some maintain that realism appeared in the Renaissance period while others consider it to be the child of the 19th century and still others again believe that realism is eternal and that all genuine art is realistic. The advocates of the last point of view cite ancient art which was already realistic. One could challenge this by saying that 1) it was a very

special kind of realism (mythological realism), and 2) in the history of art conceptions of the world were advanced by classicism, sentimentalism, romanticism and other art trends.

Of course classicism and sentimentalism carried their own kind of artistic truth. But that does not warrant imputing elements of realism to these trends. Such an approach would be unhistorical and would ignore the fact that realism itself is a specific type of artistic truth characteristic only of certain periods. Identifying all the historically diverse types of artistic truth with realism in the final analysis leads to the erroneous concept of "realism without shores".

Antiquity explained the world through myth. It was at once a realistic and an illusory-fantastic view of the world, a spontaneously dialectical view.

The *mythological realism* of antiquity espouses a heroic conception of man, asserts the unity of the individual and society, and harmony of the individual's inner world (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides). Philosophy, religious, scientific and ethical ideas were organic parts of Ancient Greek art. The antique hero is active and energetic. He is anything but a suffering individual at the mercy of history and fate. Although he bows to necessity and at times is unable to save his life, he fights, and necessity manifests itself only through his free actions.

Medieval art stripped the hero of the will for action and put him in the trust of God. Man is a passive creature, everything is ordained from above, the world is explained through God – such are the conceptual principles of medieval art. It is full of allegories and symbols (for example, the symbolic colours in Byzantine art, the allegoric nature of the sculptural figures at the Notre-Dame de Paris). The art of the Middle Ages is so replete with symbols that it could well be called *allegoric-symbolic art*. Two artistic trends developed within medieval symbolism – religious and secular art. *The realism of the Renaissance* marks a return at a new and higher stage to the basic features of antique art. It is a dialectical return enriched by the new ideas and artistic experience of mankind. The process that began as naively realistic and spontaneous perception of the world, having grown more complex and aesthetically enriched, returns to the realistic mode of thought.

The Renaissance period tries to explain the world through itself. The world needs no external explanation: it is not explained by evil fate, God, magic or evil spells. Supernatural forces are beside the point, the cause of the state of the world lies in itself. To show the world the way it is, to explain it from within, from its own material nature – this is the hallmark of the realism of

Cervantes, Rabelais and Shakespeare.

Renaissance realism discovered the individual man and celebrated his power and beauty. Its hero is a titanic individual free in his actions.

The new conception of the world required a new theory and practice of the perspective, an artistic study of the anatomy of the human body (with reference to age, sex and movement), and prompted a search for compositional harmony and the use of colour accents to express the artist's attitude to the object of portrayal. Renaissance realism liberated the individual from medieval asceticism. The depiction of the nude body and female beauty was a potent and vivid argument in the struggle against asceticism. But this "permissive" liberation constituted both the strength and the weakness of Renaissance realism for it gave scope to all tendencies in man, both good and evil. Why does Shakespeare's Iago weave a cobweb of intrigue against Othello? Scholars name various reasons: envy, careerism, jealousy, lust for gain, racial hatred of a black man, etc. So many motives are named because Shakespeare did not indicate a single one. Iago is doing evil for no particular reason realising the principle of permissiveness in his own way. That revealed Shakespeare's awareness of the crisis of the Renaissance period. The *baroque* is an upshot of the crisis of the Renaissance ideals. While the humanists' doubt as to the value of life was but another side of their confidence that life is fruitful and important, the baroque artists turn that doubt into a credo, a concept of the vanity of human existence. The heroes of the baroque poets are exalted martyrs who have lost faith in the meaning and value of life. The artistic thinking of the baroque is over-complicated, at times mannered. The French absolutism of the 17th century constrained the individual within the rigid regulations of statehood. The king became an intermediary as it were between the bourgeoisie and the nobility to prevent them from destroying each other. That national unity under the aegis of absolutism reconciled the irreconcilable and united what could not be united, sacrificing the individual to society.

The awareness of the conflict and the lack of historical prospect for resolving it was reflected in the art of *classicism* (Corneille, Racine, Moliere). Corneille's play *Cid* fully expresses the essence of classicism, permeated as it is with the tragic discord between the individual and society: the conflict between personal feeling and social duty. The hero of classicism is unfree in his actions and is subjected to rigid norms of social duty. The individual and his freedom are sacrificed to society and its institutions.

In medieval art the individual is subjected to God. In the art of the

Renaissance he is subjected to himself. In classicism the hero acts freely but is aware of the social necessity as embodied by the king. The absolute monarch, unlimited in his powers, becomes an arbitrary force in the hero's life.

Subordination of man to the interests of the state, mitigation of feelings by reason, sacrificing happiness and even the life of the individual to duty and following abstract norms of virtue – this is the aesthetic ideal of classicism.

The art of classicism is marked by civic awareness, concern with the interests of the state, faith in Reason, clarity of moral and aesthetic values. At the same time classicism is didactic. Its images are aesthetically monochromatic and not notable for intellectual and emotional scope, plasticity and many-sidedness.

Writing is geared to one language register (the elevated style) and does not benefit by the riches of the vernacular. In its intellectual-aesthetic conception, classicism underestimated the role of the masses of the people, treating history as the result of the deeds of great personalities. A character from the common people was barred from such an "elevated" genre as tragedy. He could appear only in a comedy. Classicism's artistic conception of the world was rationalistic and unhistorical: it solved contemporary problems by invoking the material of Greece and Rome or material so abstract that time and place did not matter.

The realism of 17th-18th century *Enlighteners* was the heir to the rationalism of the classicists. The art of that period was influenced by the sharpening social struggles when the temporary unity of the bourgeoisie and the nobility under the aegis of absolutism was broken by the onslaught of the economically strengthened bourgeoisie on the positions of the aristocracy. In contrast to the wilful individualist of the Renaissance and the regimented subject of classicism, the hero that comes to the fore is a citizen who upholds freedom by political means. Defoe, Swift, Fielding, Lessing, Lesage, Beaumarchais, Voltaire, and Diderot praise reason and the naturalness of man. To them, the enlightenment of people by reason and knowledge is the answer to all social conflicts. That period was already marked by the capitalist division of labour that makes man "private" and "partial". The realism of the Enlightenment produced no titans to match those of the Renaissance period. In place of the powerful spirit and colossal intensity of human passions the hero exhibits dexterity, cleverness and enterprise, i.e. bourgeois virtues. Art becomes democratized and draws material from various social strata including the lower orders. Social life is an object of close scrutiny. The social and domestic novel becomes the leading genre in literature. Although the realism of the Enlightenment is concerned with the social essence of its characters it differs

from critical realism in that it puts its typical characters in experimental and not typical circumstances. The realism of Enlightenment was directed against feudalism, absolutism and the aristocracy, and its critical thrust hardly affected the bourgeoisie.

Sentimentalism is an anti-rationalist trend which weepily admires the virtues of the positive characters and draws a sharp line between good and evil, the positive and the negative in life. Sentimentalism (Rousseau, Greuze, Karamzin) is addressed to reality, but unlike realism, it is unduly naive and idyllic in its treatment of the world. The complexity of life is mainly explained away by spiritual causes. Sentimentalist art is emotionally charged and mawkish.

The differences between the realism of the Enlightenment and Sentimentalism will readily be observed by comparing the painting manner of Chardin and Greuze. Chardin's realism is soberly rationalistic. His still lives express the bourgeois attachment to the world of things, to simple, solidly made and comfortable articles of daily use. Greuze is sentimental. He waxes lyrical over modest human virtues (the painting *A Paralyzed Man*, etc.). In the former case the structure of the artistic image is dominated by the rational and in the latter, the emotional element.

Romanticism was born of the atmosphere of storm before and after the bourgeois revolutions. It was a result of social hopes and disillusionment in the possibility of reordering society sensibly on the basis of freedom, equality and fraternity. Romanticism came up with the concept of the immortality of evil and eternal struggle against it: although by resisting evil man prevents it from establishing its absolute dominion over the world he cannot change the world radically and eliminate evil completely.

In romanticism, imbued with the poetry of subjectivity, idealization is the principle of generalization.

The world of romanticism is largely confined to the hero's spiritual world. The character carries in him the world's sorrow over its imperfection. It is not by chance that Heine wrote about his tragedy *Almansor*: "I have put in it my own 'self with my paradoxes, my wisdom, my love, my hatred and my madness." But in showing the hero's state of soul ("world sorrow") romanticism (Schiller, Heine, Byron, Shelly, Chateaubriand, Lermontov) made important comment on the state of the world.

Romanticism focussed on the individuality of the character divorcing itself from the real circumstances of his life. The romantic hero is plucked from the mundane life and put in extreme circumstances, and that makes him socially

valuable. He stands proud and alone rejecting the imperfect world. While romanticism merely sensed the imperfections of the new system established in the late 18th century, critical realism showed its basic inhumanity. The concept of romanticism allowed room for illusions about the new system; critical realism is a sober art of "lost illusions". The aesthetic ideals which were in most cases embodied in the positive hero of romanticism are, in realism, mediated through a whole system of images expressive of the artist's attitude to what he is portraying. Critical realism asserts the aesthetic ideal through negation. It is an indictment of the society which deprives man of freedom. It sees the mission of art in reproducing reality and pronouncing a verdict on it (Chernishevsky).

Critical Realism

Critical realism flourished in Europe beginning from the 1820s. That trend produced great names in France (Balzac, Stendhal), England (Dickens), and Russia (Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov). In Russia, critical realism developed at an accelerated pace with shortened and overlapping cycles. That is, one sees the transition from romanticism to realism in the career of one and the same artist (Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol).

Capitalism, for the first time in human history, established a worldwide economic system and drew the most diverse aspects of life into the sphere of production. Accordingly, the object of art expands; the finest nuances of human psychology (psychological analysis), the life of people (social themes), nature (landscape) and the world of things (still life) all acquire social significance and aesthetic value. Man, the main object of art, has undergone profound changes. With the development of capitalism social ties have become universal and truly worldwide. There was not a cranny left in man's inner world that did not carry social significance and present interest to the artist. All these changes in reality brought forth a new type of artistic conception of the world as embodied in critical realism. It showed life in all its complexity, many-sidedness and diversity of aesthetic qualities in keeping with the social practice that had itself become more complex and rich.

The principle of critical realism is *typification*; truthful details and the portrayal of typical characters in typical circumstances. Critical realism has exposed the inhumanity of a society which is a "dark kingdom", which turns its members into "the humiliated and the insulted", into "poor folk", and the suffering and disappointments of man into "an ordinary story". The sharp

critical edge of the 19th-century realism puts satire and comedy into the forefront. The "divine comedy" of the world acquires a mundane character and becomes "the human comedy".

At that stage in its evolution realism discards the enlighteners' conception of the natural man and seeks to explain human essence by social life. Art searches intensely the way for the development of man and humanity and upholds the humanistic ideal which considers man to be the supreme value. It does much to further the understanding of the meaning of human life and the complex interaction between man and nature, and to assert the historical responsibility of the individual. Art in the 20th century is confronted with an increasingly complex reality, with social catastrophes, the aggravating social contradictions, conflicts engendered by the current scientific and technological revolution, with global problems (political, ecological, moral) that affect the interests of the whole mankind, and accordingly it has an audience with new demands. Critical realism, which continues to be a leading progressive trend in Western art, has responded to these new demands by focusing its conceptual efforts on the problems of communication, alienation, conformism and disunity. Faulkner, Hemingway, Saint-Exupery, Bergman, Antonioni, Fellini and other realist Western artists attempt to provide an alternative to the loneliness which according to existentialism is the lot of man. Saint-Exupery celebrates a man of action. "If I am not a participant, who am I?" is the motto in all his books. He comes out for universal brotherhood of man. The main message of *Le Petit Prince* is that man cannot be happy on earth if someone is in distress on a distant star. The idea that inspired the life and work of Saint-Exupery was communication between humans, breaking their isolation from one another.

Man derives joy not so much from success as from the knowledge that he has done everything to fulfil his mission – this is the idea running through Hemingway's work. *The Old Man and the Sea*, which sums up his philosophy, has the sentence: "A man can be destroyed but not defeated". That idea is central to Hemingway's prose which draws on diverse material and life experiences and whose heroes are men imbued with humanism. For Hemingway, no man can be "an island all by himself". This knowledge makes his heroes seek social justice and is one artistic way of conveying the idea of the responsibility of man.

The simultaneous appearance of such great works as *Hamlet* and *Don Quixote* was at once logical and paradoxical. And similarly, there is a significance in the appearance at about the same time of *The Island* (Hadaka no

Shima), a film directed by Kaneto Shindo of Japan, and Fellini's *La Doice Vita*. These two films, contrasting in their subject matter and artistic idiom make a statement on different sides of the same problem. *The Island* speaks about unremitting toil which stupefies man and leaves no time and strength for enjoying leisure, culture values and the boons of modern civilization, thus making life meaningless and inhuman. *La Doice Vita* shows that endless pleasure divorced from creative work, too, is meaningless, anti-human, destructive and stypefying.

Fellini in his film *Otto e mezzo* (Eight and a Half) seems to declare, "I am human, so I am searching. The world is complex and chaotic, but I do not lose hope of finding harmony between the individual and the world." The film's main character is a tormented, questing film director. He looks for the meaning of life in his work but he does not know what to say to people. Everything seems to have been said already, and yet people are unhappy. Neither political doctrines, nor philosophical teachings, nor religious beliefs have made people happy, claims Fellini. Together with his hero he is looking for a "formula of life" to solve all problems. A huge tower, a launcher for a colossal rocket, is erected on the film set. It is a latter-day tower of Babel. People are going to escape from the earth which is threatened with nuclear death.

The modern Noah's Ark will save the few select by taking them to an unknown new world. But, however far man may travel in outer space, he cannot get away from his cozy, blue, probably unique planet. Escape from the complexities of earthly life is no way out. And the director makes his noisy polyglot crowd solemnly come back down the gangway. The artist, desperate at his own impotence, and at a loss what to do with his characters, who symbolize mankind, suddenly hits on a brilliant, wise and symbolic solution. He orders music to start playing and people hold hands and form themselves into a circle. They no longer fear disunity, loneliness and the atomic threat. Once they have come together, people have no need to leave their planet, what they need is not a Noah's Ark rocket, but a handshake and the music of human communion. The profoundly humane image of the modern world resolving Fellini's tense drama is symbolic and fraught with great historical meaning.

Overcoming the alienation of people from one another is the leading motive in the work of the American film director Stanley Kramer. *The Defiant Ones* tells the story of two escaped convicts, a black and a white man, who managed to break the chains linking their hands and the race prejudice that

chained their souls, and instead of the inhuman link establish a truly human bond, a bond of friendship. The pursuers were not in a hurry for they were sure that the age-old mutual hatred between a white and a black would "do its job", the fugitives would quarrel and fall into their hands without much effort on their part. But gradually, first due to circumstances and then consciously discovering truly human qualities in each other, the fugitives gain something more than physical freedom. They become free spiritually. Their dramatic wanderings bring home to Jackson that his black companion is courageous and capable of true friendship. The black man's nobleness impresses the white man who has been brought up to racial intolerance. When a chance presents itself to save himself by betraying the black man, he prefers to stay by his side. In the final scene the situation repeats itself with the roles reversed. Now Callen, who is on the threshold of freedom, renounces it in order to stay with Jackson. The episode is visually symbolic. The Negro and the white man are running towards a train. The Negro jumps on the footplate and stretches a hand to the white. For a second the viewer sees a close-up of the joined black and white hands. But, weakened by his wound, Jackson cannot climb. And then Callen jumps off the rushing flatcar. The train, the fugitives' only hope, leaves. The pursuers are closing in them. Callen puts Jackson's head on his lap and sings. The pursuers look with surprise at a Negro holding in his arms a white man who trustingly surrenders himself to the newfound friend. The symbol lends itself to interpretations on different levels: the life of one depends on the life of another; by force of circumstances the mutual hatred between a white and a black gives way to mutual help; no people (whites) can be free if they are oppressing another people (blacks); the whites and the blacks must free themselves together. In *The Defiant Ones* Kramer shows the false nature of the conflict between "blacks and whites" and the reality of more complex social conflicts. Kramer's *Judgement at Nuremberg* tackles the problem of personal responsibility before humanity. A person committing an evil deed is responsible for his acts even if he is fulfilling an order, even if refusing to fulfil the order would mean death. Both the man who gives orders and the one who fulfils them are personally responsible. The difference is only in the degree of responsibility. According to Kramer, any, even a temporary deal with fascism is a crime.

The artistic approaches of the Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman and the Italian Antonioni are profoundly different but their conceptions of the individual have much in common and correspond to the realistic conception

of the world.

All of Bergman's films warn against forgetting or mistrusting the cultural heritage, whether it be moral tenets, the mysteries of inspiration and artistic mastery, or aesthetic values created by itinerant circus actors and challenging bourgeois values. In his film *The Seventh Seal* all the characters die: the strong, courageous but rationalistic and passive Knight Antonius Block, the wily arms-bearer Jons who acts first and thinks afterwards, the innocent girl accused of being possessed by the devil, and the knight's faithful wife. In the apocalyptic final scene of that film parable the silhouettes of the characters appear against the pre-dawn sky. The shadows are holding hands and are being led by an impassionate and implacable visitor, a woman in a black gown with a scythe in her hand. Death spares only the weakest, the childishly innocent: the itinerant artist Jof, his wife Mia and their son. Only art is immortal, all the rest is transient and is swept off the earth by cruel time. Art links generations, throws a bridge from the past to the present and from the present to the future. This is the message of the film.

Antonioni's *Blow-Up*, like all the films of that Italian director, is about alienation, loneliness and the vulnerability of man. The main character is a young, energetic and talented art photographer who holds liberal views on everything including sex, is tolerant of the escapades of his beloved wife and is not averse to having an amorous fling himself. But having cast aside traditional morality he becomes a captive of sexual permissiveness and feels he has no right to restore intimacy with his wife, which aggravates his loneliness.

The man's vulnerability in the world is brought home to him not only through his own spiritual vacuum. One morning, in a garden obeying his cameraman's instincts, he automatically photographs a couple of lovers. The young woman who had got into the frame begs the artist to give him back the film and even offers him money. She seems to be afraid that her liaison would come to light. But when the artist develops the film and has a good look at the otherwise trivial situation by "blowing it up", i.e. magnifying the details, he sees something that sheds a new light on the situation. He discovers that the young woman is leading her lover to a spot in the depth of the park where a stranger hiding in the bushes is aiming his pistol at him. The discovery shakes the photographer. It is night but he runs to the park and there in the moonlight he sees a body of a man under the big tree where the lovers were kissing. The author seems to say to his viewers: look at life. Look at it up close and you will see it quite different, more complex and dangerous, full of

treachery, alienation and enmity.

Because he "blows up" a picture the main hero becomes party to a secret of treachery and murder. He cannot guard the secret alone, it weighs on him. He may be a cynical "modern" young man but he is an artist and has a sense of social responsibility. So he rushes home to share the secret with his wife, only to find her in bed with a lover. He rushes to his friends, but they are befuddled by drugs and sex. The artist dashes about the town, but he is surrounded either by indifferent passers-by or by crazy pop music fans. A murder has been committed, a person has died, but the world is criminally cruel and indifferent to an individual. He must confide the secret into someone but he has nowhere to go. Where is man to go? Antonioni gives a stark answer to the famous Dostoyevsky question: nowhere! The symbolic final scene crowns the hero's fruitless attempt to find a way out, to break through the wall of alienation. Robot-like pantomime actors are playing tennis without a ball. The hero watches that weird tennis match. It is not sport but theatre, an improvisation. He can make no sense of the game and walks away but suddenly all eyes are on him: "the ball" "flew away" and "fell" at the photographer's feet. The mime actors gesture to him to pick up the ball and throw it into the court. But there is no ball. The actors, however, are so persistent and seem to be so fiercely convinced that they are really playing tennis that the photographer accepts their rules of the game and enters the world of artistic convention. He lifts the nonexistent ball and tosses it. One of the "players" "catches" the ball and puts it into play. The hero hears the ball meeting the racket, falling to the ground and sees the "excitement of the game". And then suddenly a happy smile comes to his face. For the first time his loneliness is broken and he feels at one with other people.

The final scene carries the hope that cruel reality could be humanized by culture and the arts. Man must accept culture with its conventions and its centuries-old experience and then he would be able to communicate with other people. So Antonioni who shows in *Blow-Up* the humanizing mission of art takes a view of the world similar to that of Bergman's conception of the individual as expressed in *The Seventh Seal*. That constitutes the invariant humanistic conception present in all the art of critical realism. This humanism is kind to men even though it does little to transform their ill-ordered life.

Socialist Realism

Socialist realism was born in Russia in the early 20th century. It was founded by Gorky. The main ideological and artistic forerunner of socialist realism was the classical Russian art with its realistic and social educational traditions and powerful ideas of patriotism and freedom. Soviet art advanced a new conception of man and the world in the very first decades of its existence.

As early as the 1920s Soviet aestheticians and artists engaged in a sharp polemic over the concept of the individual. Challenging one-sided and simplistic concepts of man, the concept was gaining strength which saw man as an active individual merged with the people and involved in the making of history.

From the outset the artistic concept of socialist realism emphasized the responsibility of the individual before history, the individual's being part of the historical process and of his own people. Socialist realism praises as the highest virtues heroism, selflessness, self-sacrifice (Petrov-Vodkin, *The Death of a Commissar*), dedication ("to give your heart to time to break" – Mayakovsky). The art of socialist realism discovered that involvement in the conscious making of history could be a *source of historical optimism and invest an individual life with social meaning*. This is the pathos that informs the novels *The Iron Flood* by Serafimovich and *Chapayev* by Furmanov, *An Optimistic Tragedy* (a play by Vishnevsky), Mayakovsky's poem "Good" and Alexei Tolstoy's trilogy *The Ordeal*.

Sergei Eisenstein's films *Strike*, *The Battleship "Potyomkin"* and *October* show the fate of an individual through the fate of the masses and put at the focus of the plot something that previously could only be a background, "a social landscape", "a mass scene", "an epic digression". Eisenstein did not downgrade the human content of his art and did not sacrifice the traditional individual hero to history. The mother in the episode on the Odessa stairs in *The Battleship "Potyomkin"* evokes compassion, and Ignat, the maker of shirts of mail in *Alexander Nevsky*, wins our sympathies. But the viewer's emotions are never focused on the character's personal destiny and are engaged by the wider drama of history itself.

The humanism of Soviet art has always included the idea of the international brotherhood of the peoples of the world. The hero went to war and died, not only for his own country but also for the happiness of the whole mankind.

The individual was deeply conscious of his responsibility for the destinies of the world. The Great Patriotic War (1941–1945) against fascism broadened the

life experience of Soviet artists and deepened their conception of humanism. From the mid-50s cultural life in the Soviet Union, and its arts, entered a new stage. The aesthetic ideal of art grew and became richer. The problems of the relationship between the individual and society, humanism and progress came to be treated in all their complexity and with dialectical flexibility; the artists have exhibited a keener sense of responsibility before history and the individual.

While not renouncing anything of the discoveries of previous years and upholding even more vigorously than before the historically active individual, socialist realism became more fully aware that the process is a two-way one: not only the individual to history, but also history to the individual. It raised the problem of the *value of man in his own right*. Today, as before, Soviet artists praise the heroic ability of man "to give your heart to time to break". Today, as before, the destiny of an individual is presented as part of the destiny of his nation. Today, as before, Soviet art praises the individual who is involved in the historical process with the masses. But the novels of Bondarev and Bykov, the prose of Aitmatov and the films of Romm and Reizman as well as pursuing the traditional theme of the individual's responsibility before society, give unprecedented prominence to the responsibility of society for the destiny and happiness of the individual.

A person must give himself to other persons, "be a person for others". Egotistic isolation robs life of its meaning, makes it absurd. But while a person spiritually isolated from society is in danger of moral degradation, the development of society without regard for man and contrary to his interests is essentially unprogressive. The artistic conception of socialist realism today is confronted with two adversaries who seek to destroy the highest human values: social indifference and egoism on the one hand and leftist extremism on the other.

Many discoveries in the history of mankind have been not only a blessing but also a curse to the human race. That is why progress is not an abstract concept. Humanism shows the direction of social progress. Man must develop and improve through society and for the good of other people, and society must develop through man and for the good of the individual. This dialectics of man and humanity constitutes the essence of history.

A humanistic relationship between man and society is portrayed in Sholokhov's story *The Fate of a Man* which celebrates the courage, selflessness and magnanimity of the hero, Sokolov, and is deeply concerned with his fate. The hero behaves courageously in a Nazi prison camp. He saves his

commander's life by killing a traitor. He escapes from the death camp and returns home only to learn that his whole family are dead. It is with enormous difficulty, like a patient recovering from a grave illness, that Sokolov returns to peacetime life. An orphan boy in desperate need of help and compassion helps Sokolov to recover a sense of purpose in life. It is not only the poor waif that the hero brings back to life but also himself, for he now feels that there is someone who needs him. Sholokhov's story is imbued with sad protest and admonition. All of us, it seems to say, owe more to our fellow men and could do more to make them happy. But he ends the story on a high note of hope and faith in man's fortitude: "What did the future hold for them? I wanted to believe that this Russian, this man of unbreakable will, would stick it out, and that the boy would grow at his father's side into a man who could endure anything, would overcome any obstacle if his country called upon him to do so." Sholokhov in that story asserts that a person is responsible before his nation, and the surrounding people are responsible for the happiness of every "small and great" person.

The art of socialist realism helps the individual to understand that the meaning of life is in identifying oneself with all things human, and it forms individuals of integrity, people who are open to reason, feelings and conscience and humanist ideas. A harmonious individual who is part of history, society and humanity is the supreme humanistic ideal of socialist realism.

An important aspect of the conception of the individual in contemporary socialist realism is the link between modern man and the national tradition. In the early decades of Soviet art, artists were keen to spot the new traits that people developed under the influence of a new mode of life. Ivanov and Fadeyev in their portrayals of partisans in the Far East, Furmanov in the portrait of Chapayev, Sholokhov in his character of Davydov, Korneichuk and Vishnevsky show people who break with the traditions and mores of the old world and establish new relationships. It seemed that the invisible threads linking the individual to the past had snapped. Emphasis on the break with the past and its tradition was characteristic of the period when the new man was emerging. By contrast the art of the last two decades deals with man who, though constantly on move, constantly evolving, is already established, having proved himself in the face of history. The attention of the artists has swung from the problem of the emergence of the new man to the traits that link him to the centuries-old national, psychological, cultural, ethnographic, domestic and ethical traditions. And they discovered that people who in the

ardour of revolution swept away national tradition were incapable of meaningful and humane life and that the statement "genuine innovation continues and develops progressive tradition" held good for the education of the human individual as well.

Chinghiz Aitmatov in his story *The White Steamer* condemns a character by the name of Orazkul who is cruel and despotic to people and nature, who despises the traditions, legends and taboos of his people. The She-Deer whom he orders to kill is a symbol of the national tradition of being kind to all things living, a symbol of the past of the Kirghiz people. Orazkul is evil not only because he bullies other people but also because he shows contempt for the history of his people.

The motivations and inner contradictions of the individual, his links with society and the destiny of his' nation, the dialectical link between the internal and external aspects of the individual – these are the abiding concerns of Soviet art. Some biographical films of the 40s and 50s took a somewhat simplistic view of the artist's ties with the people and dependence on society (the films about Glinka, Moussorgsky and others come to mind). These films often ignored the inner contradictions of the artist and his creative activity.

The biographical film *Tchaikovsky* challenges that tradition. It shows Tchaikovsky's works as expressing deep inner conflicts in the composer's personality. And it would have been profoundly true if these contradictions were not treated as the extension in an adult of complexes developed in childhood but were related to the complex social reality. In its probings into the artist's inner life, the film raises an important problem of the role of inner contradictions of the individual for his activity, but unfortunately it does not show the formative influence of the social milieu on the artist.

Today the art of socialist realism has developed a profound conception of the individual: man lives in "a beautiful and furious world" and is aware that "the nation is not complete without me" (Andrei Platonov), the individual's oneness with the people presupposes the recognition of the intrinsic value of the individual. Socialist realism is heir to the humanistic tradition in the way it treats the problem of "the individual and progress". Herzen wrote: "Are you consigning contemporary people to the pitiable role of caryatids who are supporting a terrace on which others would some day dance ... or to being wretched workers who drag, knee-deep in mud, a barge with some mysterious fleece and the tame inscription "Future *progress*" on its flag? The weary fall by the roadside ... and there is as much of the road as at the beginning.... A goal that is infinitely remote is not a goal, but, if you like, a

trick.... Every period, every generation, every life has always had its own fullness, and new requirements and new means are developed along the way.... The goal of every generation is this itself.

Socialist realism today proclaims the concept of a historically active individual and upholds his intrinsic value. It analyses the relationship between the individual and society in all its complexity. Progress is reactionary if it destroys the individual. Progress, but not progress that is contrary to or at the expense of the individual; the individual for other people and society for the individual – this is the concept of the individual advanced by socialist realism. That concept is inspired by lofty humanistic ideals and accords with the objective course of history.

The class nature of art in a class society becomes, in the art of socialist realism, a conscious and consistent point of view inspired by loyalty to the party and the people. It is not an elitist art divorced from the people and catering to a "satiated heroine" or "to the top ten thousand". The art of socialist realism is addressed to the broad masses and is democratic and humanistic. It does not follow its audience, but is ahead of it, leading it towards a richer inner and cultural life and high ideals. It is an important means of moulding a harmonious personality.

AESTHETICS: THE THEORETICAL HISTORY OF ART

The Science of the Process of Art

MODERNIST TRENDS (CRITICAL SURVEY)

Expressionism: An Alienated, Confused Man in a Hostile World

In the early 20th century Germany saw the rise of a movement against the prevalent academism in the art of the time. It was initiated by architecture students Kirchner, Bleyl, Heckel, Schmidt-Rottluff and others who formed a group called Die Brücke (The Bridge) in Dresden in 1905. None of the group's members had any experience of painting and their experiments in art were, by their own admission, "an explosion of will and faith". The revolt they started led to the birth of expressionism, a new trend in art.

That trend did not concern itself with theoretical manifestoes. Its name was given to it not by its members but by critics who singled out emotional expressiveness as its dominant feature. Expressionism was a response to the acute contradictions of the time and marked the protest of the individual against total alienation which had by that time clearly manifested itself. Expressionism regarded technological progress as a scourge, a horror, a historical monster, a danger. It was a fruit of social disenchantment. It simplified forms, introduced new rhythms and was wedded to intense colours and exaggerated emotionalism.

The hallmarks of the expressionist theatre are a hallucinatory vision, extremes in everything; rapid succession of episodes, contrasting mise-en-scenes; active but individualistic political protest. Expressionism's hero is driven by powerful emotions in a restless world torn by passions. The artistic symbol and image of expressionism is Munch's picture *The Cry*. It shows a man in a conventionalized urban environment screaming with horror. The gaping abyss of his mouth is the picture's compositional focus. What makes this man scream? The artist does not show any real or visible threat to him leaving the beholder to imagine some universal cause of horror, pain and suffering. The world at large is hostile to the individual as such whatever the individual's qualities. We see a "man without qualities"; his only link with the world is horror at its imperfections, disharmonies and inhumanities. The space around the screaming mouth is organized to create an image of spreading ripples: the soul-piercing shriek spreads in concentric circles all over the world, and fills it. But the world is deaf and unresponsive; it does not notice the terrible scream, it is indifferent to the pain experienced by the individual who is

helpless in the face of formidable reality. Munch's picture seems to say that man in the alien world can only scream about his pain, scream without any hope of help, like a living creature in torment.

Fragmentation is the leading aesthetic category of expressionism. It opposes an individual bewildered by the chaotic world incapable of forming harmonious relationships to the integral individual portrayed by realistic art. That side of expressionism is particularly manifest in painting and drawing, for example in Kokoschka's painting *Herwarth Walden*.

Present-day Western scholars and critics see expressionism as a response to the threat of destruction facing mankind. And they argue that because that threat has infinitely grown with the advent of nuclear weapon, expressionism is bound to prevail over all other trends.

Franz Marc, an expressionist artist and theorist, has come out with a thesis that in the face of the modern confusion of minds the only way to become pure is to isolate oneself and one's cause. The principle of isolated life paved the way both for the objectless art of abstractionism which flees reality and the ideas of the individual's essential loneliness underlying existentialism.

Friedrich, a young sculptor in *Die Wandlung* (Metamorphosis), an expressionist novel by the German writer Toller, is lonely and dreams of the brotherhood of man. But in his quests he runs into alienation and hostility of the people around him. When a colonial war begins Friedrich signs up as a volunteer to go to the front. He is shaken by the suffering and death. He feels that his enthusiasm about the war had been misguided. But the war goes on. Friedrich, one of the few survivors, is wounded and laid up at a hospital. In due course the enemy is defeated. The "liberation army" has fulfilled its mission and Friedrich is decorated with an Iron Cross. Back home he resumes his artistic activities and receives an order to make a monument to celebrate "the victory of the Fatherland". He makes a huge statue of a naked man with clenched fists raised in the air. The statue is meant to symbolize the might of a "liberation army". But one day Friedrich meets a crippled war invalid begging in the street and he recognizes him as his wartime buddy. Shaken by that encounter, the sculptor smashes his statue and wants to kill himself. His sister stops him. Friedrich goes to a factory to meet workers. He becomes friends with these work-weary people and preaches the ideas of brotherhood to them. The appeal for brotherhood is a romantic dream, a pacifist Utopia.

Expressionism's scream against the madness of war and the grinding meaninglessness of life is a scream of pain and impotence.

Franz Kafka, a major exponent of expressionism, was one of the first writers

to become aware that man is a victim of the social institutions he has himself created and which have gone out of control: a person may be suddenly brought to trial, he may be spied on by other people who represent some dark and mysterious forces (*The Trial*); he may become aware that he has no rights and spend the rest of his life vainly trying to secure permission to live in this world (*The Castle*). Kafka's writings offer no glimmer of hope. His novella *Der Jäger Gracchus* (The Hunter Gracchus) has all the main features of the expressionist conception of man. Gracchus is "suspended" in midair between being and non-being: he is neither alive nor dead, he is neither in this world nor in the other world. A thousand and a half years after his death, Gracchus sails about at the mercy of the winds, without direction, in the nether world. Once, when he calls at a port, the hunter is visited by a man who asks him to tell him briefly but coherently what had happened to him. To this Gracchus replies that he can see no coherence in the phenomena of the world and in the thoughts of men although they keep shouting about the interconnection of all and sundry.

Shakespeare's Hamlet was tragically aware that the times were "out of joint". Kafka's character denies any coherence, even coherence in expressing one's thoughts. Expressionism argues that the world is inherently chaotic and space and time are disjointed. Solitary Gracchus is totally divorced from the world making irrelevant the contradiction between "self" and reality, between life and death. Gracchus is leading an existence that denies life and reality.

In Kafka's story *Metamorphosis* a young man, Gregor Samsa, wakes up one morning to discover that he has turned into an ugly insect. This fantastic metamorphosis occurs in very real mundane circumstances and is described with dry impartiality and detachment. Gregor's body has no hands but has a lot of legs which do not obey him very well. So he cannot get up and open the door to his parents who are worried by his absence and to the man sent in by the landlord. Gregor is particularly pained because the people close to him do not understand what is happening to him, but he keeps hoping that someone would be able to help him. However, all his attempts to make contact with people and explain his situation and make himself understood fail.

Slavic folklore may be of some help in understanding the underlying message of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. A folk tale called *The Pink Flower* tells about a youth who is turned into a monster. But the monster meets a girl who appreciates the kind soul behind his ugly looks and falls in love with him. Love transforms the monster bringing back his human look. In the folk tale transformation occurs twice: the youth becomes a hideous monster, and then

the monster becomes a handsome youth. The cause and catalyst of the second metamorphosis is human sympathy, compassion and love. In the world described by Kafka the metamorphosis is irreversible, it can only be for the worse and a man gets no sympathy. Man is lonely and even his relatives and friends unwittingly betray him and abandon him to the mercy of fate. Gregor Samsa dies because his loneliness is insuperable.

Kafka's *The Village Doctor* uses the story of the illness and death of a boy to comment on the problem of the meaning of life and the continuity of generations. If the boy had an aim in life, if he could answer the question "why live?" he would have been saved. He would also have stayed alive if an older man with professional skills could have answered the question tormenting the boy. But the world in which Kafka's characters live offers no answer to that question. The answer is in the method of perpetuating oneself in other people furnished by a humanistic culture. Orienting himself on the individual, Kafka could not find a way for the individual to join humanity, could not bring his boy into the historical process that would have given him the answer to the question about the meaning of life.

In expressionism's artistic conception, man lives in a hostile world from which there is no way out. There is no hope. The essential power of the individual is alienated from him and embodied in hostile social institutions. The expressionist artist seems to say through his works: "I want to be human but it is impossible, the world is hostile to the individual."

Surrealism: A Bewildered Man in a Mysterious and Unknowable World

The term "surrealism" was coined by the French poet Guillaume Apollinaire who defined the genre of one of his plays as "surrealist drama". And in the 1920s and 30s the poets Breton and Soupault started a new trend in art which they called "surrealism". The theoreticians of surrealism hoped that it would create a new artistic reality, more real than the surrounding world.

Surrealism, they maintained, "rips off the veil" from the world, creates a reality of implausibility and a second, "genuine" reality, the surreality. Hence the exceptional importance attached to the *miraculous* which they made the key category of their aesthetic attitude to the world. "There is nothing but the miraculous" (Breton). The reality of the surreal, the genuineness of the mysterious, the incredibility of the quotidian become the artist's main preoccupations. As the French poet Paul Eluard said, there are as many marvels in a glass of water as in the ocean deep.

In surrealism man, the world, things and even space and time are fluid and relative and their boundaries are blurred. There is nothing definite, everything is distorted, displaced and hazy. The world is a chaotic mass of phenomena. So there are no borderlines between happiness and unhappiness, the individual and society. Surrealism's conception of the individual could be put in the following way: *I am a human being but the boundaries of my personality and of the world are blurred*. The individual does not know where his "self" begins and where it ends, where the world is and what it is. Surrealism invests the Universe with dramatic tension. A lonely man is confronted with a cold and mysterious world:

*A philosophical butterfly
Alighted on a rosy star,
And that made a window to the inferno,
A masked man forever stands before a nude woman...*

(Andre Breton)

Intuitivist surreal association between the artist and the world is the programme not only for the artist but for the audience as well, and for man in general. Intuitivism is the basis of the surrealist conception of the individual and of the artistic method of surrealism.

Surrealism proclaims the chaos of the world and tries to use artistic form to restore the broken order of things and men. It proclaims unlimited freedom for the artist's imagination, free of any logical constraints. Thus, the individual in the work of Salvador Dali is driven by Freudian complexes and perceives reality through the pelvic bone (this is how a landscape in one of his paintings is portrayed).

The trend is marked by irrational intellectualism, cold pseudo-emotionality, rationalistic anaesthesia of feelings and the wish to "desentimentalize" reality. Instead of emotions there is a parade of the means of conveying them.

Surrealism refuses to control the artistic process and indeed the individual as such by any moral norms, it seeks to clean the individual of the social, moral and individual "husk", proclaiming aversion to social life.

The poetic principle of surrealism is *super-metaphor*. Metaphor is assigned absolute value and is carried to startling lengths when the most unlikely objects are likened and similes are capricious and arbitrary. Originality of images verges on mannerism. Poems read like an encyclopedia of metaphors.

A. Breton wrote in one of his works that a comparison of two objects

maximally remote from each other or any other mode of presenting them in an exciting and startling form is the foundation of the highest poetry. The poetic toolkit of surrealism includes alogical montage, nonsemantic juxtapositions, irrational connection of sentences, words, visual impressions. The ideal model of a surrealist image is the meeting of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operation table. The predilection of surrealism to alogical metaphors produces colourfully enigmatic and mysteriously shifting images:

*Nature has fallen into the nets of your life,
The tree, your shadow, lays bare its flesh: the sky.
It has the voice of sand and the gestures of wind.
And everything you say breathes behind you.*

(Paul Eluard)

Surrealism is inconcrete and unhistorical as a matter of principle. St. John Perse claimed that he had evolved as an artist separately from his time and its laws and that he sought to avoid any historical and geographical references. Reality disappears, it flows away like the clock in Dali's picture *The Whims of Memory* flows off a table. Time and space become diffused. History disappears.

Surrealism argues that the historical process does not exist and that time is unhistorical: indifference to history (Char); there is no history except the history of the soul (Perse); indifference to everything in the world (Breton). Common sense has no place in the art of surrealism, the artist deals with illusions, fantasy, dreams, miracles which supposedly constitute the sphere of freedom.

The slumber of reason, immersion in the "wave of dreams" (early Louis Aragon), the intuitive element, associative, "automatic" writing (Breton) are the principles of the surrealist. "Surrealism. Pure psychic automatism.... Dictation of thought in the absence of any control on the part of Reason, outside any aesthetic or moral preoccupation".¹

A century and a half after the philosophy of Kant surrealism formulated artistically the idea of transcendence, proclaiming the existence of a super reality behind the real phenomena. This artistic trend makes polysemy of imaginative thought infinite and carries it to the point of artistic agnosticism.

Existentialism: A Lonely Man in an Absurd World

Existentialism in art is based on the concept of the absurdity of life most fully expressed in the work of Albert Camus. His novel *La peste* (The Plague) has a strange protagonist, Cottard, who rejoices in the misfortunes and calamities that befall a city. How can a person be glad that plague is killing his fellow citizens and may not spare himself? Before long we learn that Cottard is wanted by the police and but for the epidemic he would have been arrested and put on trial. A universal calamity diverting the blind state bureaucracy from the execution of its routine duty saves Cottard from the looming threat: he was already being shadowed by some anonymous, faceless types. The natural picture of a plague-stricken city and the context of a philosophical novel is invaded by unreal creatures, phantoms born of mystical other-worldly forces. These ghosts threaten and hound poor Cottard. This is a quotation from another work expounding a whole system of artistic thought. The address to which the French author sends us is not far to seek. It is Kafka's novel *The Trial*. Both Kafka and Camus show victims of an anonymous organization squeezed into a Procrustean bed of norms devoid of human content. The character of Cottard, who prefers plague to being pursued by anonymous forces, is Camus' attempt to interpret the recent past: between the dates of the writing of *The Trial* and *The Plague* lies the dark shadow of fascism. The insecurity of man in the face of hostile forces opposed to humanity is most dramatically manifested in a fascist state. The question suggests itself, why the dreamlike images of Kafka which seem to be alien to the rationalistic manner of Camus are so much at home in his novel? Because there is a line of succession from Kafka to Camus. Existentialism has its sources in expressionism, and its philosophical origins go back to the theories of Kierkegaard, the 19th-century Danish philosopher. The existentialist conception of the historical process is laid out in the play *L'Etat de Siege* by Albert Camus. Trouble breaks out in a city: a comet appears in the sky and people are worried by the ill omen. The ruler climbs the rostrum to calm the citizenry citing the principle of his government which is that everything should remain unchanged. A strange man and woman approach the platform. The stranger declares that he wants to take power in his hands. On the ruler's order, two guardsmen try to arrest the newcomers but the woman produces a notebook and crosses out two names. The guards drop dead. In panic, the ruler leaves the city and the stranger who calls himself Plague declares that he has come to rule the city, that he would put an

end to the disorderly and disorganized fashion in which people lived and died. Plague brings to the city a fascist order, the order of Auschwitz.

A townsman by the name of Diego learns Plague's secret: he is all-powerful and can destroy everyone but he is helpless if people stop being afraid of him. Diego leads his fellow citizens in a rebellion. Plague strikes thousands of people off the list of the living but new rebels fearlessly continue the struggle. Plague then resorts to a stratagem. He throws away his notebook. A passer-by who finds the book crosses out the names of his enemies; another citizen takes the notebook away from him and crosses out the latter's name and several of his enemies. Thus discord creeps into the rebel ranks. Diego gets hold and disposes of the evil book and the rebels close their ranks. Plague resorts to another trick. He offers Diego a choice: he would leave the city on condition that either Diego or his girl die; or they would both leave the city while he remains. This situation models a key existential premise: man realises himself in free choice and that is the only form in which the individual can realise himself in an absurd world. Characteristically, the play, which lays out the existentialist conception of history, has the individual facing a choice between bad and worse; according to Camus, history has no happy way out for the individual.

Diego chooses his own death. His girl sits by his bedside and they see through the window how Plague is leaving the city and the old ruler, who had betrayed his people, returns to take his place. Instead of a common death for all in the gas chamber there returns the old diversity of deaths, and instead of equality in rightlessness in the face of Plague there are the old inequalities between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the disfranchised. Diego's girl reproaches him: "Ten thousand years of the city's life are not worth ten years of our love." Diego knows himself that his choice is unhappy but there is no better choice.

The idea the play puts across is that life goes in circles, with history proceeding from bad to worse in order to return to bad again. There is no upward movement, there is the squirrel's wheel of history in which the life of mankind rotates meaninglessly. That constitutes existentialism's historical conception.

The concept of *absurdity* on the personal and mundane, as opposed to the global level, is set out in Camus' play entitled *Le Malentendu* (Misunderstanding) (1941). The plot is simple; a mother and her daughter Martha keep a provincial inn and dream of saving enough money to be able to move to a big city. Martha tries to persuade her mother to murder a

lodger in order to get rich. The mother hesitates but Martha prevails upon her and they poison the guest. In the morning the dead man's wife arrives and from her they learn that the man was Martha's brother Jean who had left home long ago in search of fortune. Having come into wealth and married, Jean decided to rescue his mother and sister from their stick-in-the-mud place. Feeling lonely, Jean wanted to be recognized at home as their kin and in this way break his loneliness. But things turned out otherwise and Jean died.

The money which the inn-keepers wanted to get by crime was already coming their way. Camus in this play seems to put a case in favour of passivity: action inherently negates the goal for the sake of which it is undertaken. Loneliness, according to Camus, is absolute: all human ties have been severed and even a mother can be an accomplice in the murder of her son.

For Camus, as for existentialism as a whole, the whole world, the whole of human society is a "misunderstanding", an absolute absurdity. People are basically lonely, isolated and doomed to mutual misunderstanding. Every person is a world into himself. But these worlds are not linked to one another. Communication is superficial and does not affect the depth of the soul, that is why it fails to break loneliness. This sums up the existentialist conception of man and the world.

Camus addresses his work to the "millions of loners". That social position has been prompted by egocentrism, the formalistic, mechanical uniting of people, the creation of a complex state machine which devours human souls. The associations people have formed suppress the individual and grind the personality. This type of association of men causes the existentialists to want to withdraw into themselves. Instead of looking for genuine human foundations and forms of unity existentialist artists have committed themselves to disunity, maintaining that people are inevitably separated from each other.

The fundamental loneliness proclaimed by existentialism logically leads to the *meaninglessness of life*. Life is not absurd as long as there are links between people, as long as man finds his extension in humanity. But if a man is alone, if he is the only value in the world, then he is socially worthless, he has no future, and death is absolute. It erases man. Life is robbed of its meaning. Plague in Camus' novel of that title is a telling and many-sided symbol. It is not only a disease but a particularly cruel order of human life. At the same time Plague is death dormant within life. It may wake up one day and despatch hordes of its servants – dying rats – into the streets of a sunlit city. The unknown is dreadful and inexorable, it is always near. Man is

everywhere followed by the breath of death. Existentialism is sure that man is unable to change the world, but it is necessary to act in order to realize the freedom of will and not feel a slave to the drudgery of daily life.

The main features of the existentialist artistic method are: intellectualism, artistic modelling of situations dramatising the author's conception, a high degree of convention, a gap between ethics and aesthetics (Sartre, for example, excludes the category of conscience from the spiritual world of his characters). In the theatre of the absurd (Samuel Beckett) which carries on the existentialist tradition, absurdity is not only the content but the artistic form of the play: characters talk past each other and their non-communication makes the artistic text incoherent. The stylistics of existentialist art is the analysis of the world clouded by waves of the irrational.

Abstractionism: The Individual's Escape from Banal and Illusory Reality

Abstractionism is colour fantasy, spontaneous and impulsive self-expression, a momentary record of the state of the artist's soul, and a conscious renunciation of artistic cognition of the individual and the world, of the portrayal of reality and the pursuit of pure expressiveness.

Abstractionism was born from later impressionism and postimpressionism. It rose from a transformation of the motley impressionist ideas about the world; its traces are first noticeable even in the work of Matisse.

In 1909 Kandinsky, a Russian painter and one of the founders of abstract art, produced a picture called *Mountain*. It shows an outline reminiscent of a mountain. But colour is used for pure expression without any pretence at representation. The painting marked the transition to configurational art.

Abstractionism came into its own as a distinct trend in painting and sculpture in 1912-13 in the work of Kandinsky, Malevich and Mondrian who sought refuge from life's contradictions by turning away from realities.

In Western art abstractionism burgeoned in the 50s to become popular among artists, critics and theoreticians of painting. Those years saw a widening gap between abstractionism and reality. One can clearly discern two trends within abstractionism. The first is *psychological* going back to Kandinsky's intuitive-emotional, "lyrical" abstractions illuminating a state of the human soul as if in a flash. Kandinsky created symphonies of colour which exerted an emotional impact similar to music.

The other trend in abstractionism is *intellectual* and its founder was the Dutch painter Mondrian. He tried to reveal the logic of beauty through geometrical

abstractions. The geometrical abstractionism of Mondrian and his successors was all about combination of planes. Red, yellow and blue planes combined with uncoloured white planes to create a statically balanced, rhythmical and harmonious composition. The intellectual solutions proved meaningful for modern architecture, industrial design, for book design and interior decorations. A characteristic example is Mondrian's painting which represents a diamond-shaped canvas with two black lines of different thickness against an empty white background.

The opposition of representation and expressiveness, the reflected and active aspects of painting and sculpture is the starting premise of abstractionism.

Kandinsky saw natural forms as an obstacle to art. In his books *On Spirituality in Art* and *The Point and the Line in a Plane* he argues in the spirit of Platonian idealism that the model of society is a pyramid. At its base are materialistic and primitive people and at its summit, spiritual people. At the very pinnacle is the artist who guides minds and hearts (Plato reserved the pinnacle for philosophers). The artist, according to Kandinsky, always detaches his gaze from reality and directs it at himself, expressing himself. The abstractionists offer no value criteria to distinguish art from speculation, seriousness from joking, mastery from gimmickry. Among abstractionists were talented artists such as Kandinsky, Mondrian, Tallin and Malevich who left their mark on the art of the 20th century. They enriched the expressive palette and the rhythmical dynamic side of painting anticipating important plastic-space solutions in modern architecture and influencing the development of industrial design, applied and decorative art.

Abstractionism proclaims *the break of the link between art and reality*. The theorists of abstractionism feel that photography has usurped painting's representational function leaving it to express the subjective world of the artist. In making that assertion they forget that art photography has a different character of representation and different principles, opportunities and limits for artistic generalization than the other visual arts.

What is the social potential, the concept of the individual and the world advanced by abstractionism? "Objects have been killed by their signs", so painting must be objectless. Abstractionists take a sharply critical view of social reality that verges on complete repudiation of it. Abstractionism models an individual divorced from the world and from ideas whose freedom is arbitrariness of sensations, perceptions and self-expression. Kandinsky in presenting the theoretical case for abstractionism believed that a work of art is a construction utilising all possible forms and colours and adapting form to

inner meaning. Thereby Kandinsky put absolute value on self-expression. Herbert Read, an English art scholar, believes that abstractionism is an inevitable product of the present inhumane world. Read opposes alienation which destroys the individual to conscious estrangement of the individual from real life, escape into the diversity of colour blobs and lines, a world of pure forms and colours. If reality destroys the individual, Read seems to be right: its salvation lies in escaping from the world. But any form of individual alienation from reality is but a form of link with it. The only way out is to humanize reality.

Pop Art. The Consumer: A Deideologized Individual in a Mass Consumer Society

The term "pop art" (short for popular art) was coined by the critic Alloway in 1965. As an art trend, pop art consolidates the opposition between mass art and national art. Pop art is an artistic means to meet the "yearning for tangibility" generated by prolonged dominance of abstractionism in Western art. Some Western students of art indeed consider pop art to be a reaction to abstractionism. Pop art challenged the abstractionist refusal to perceive and portray reality by presenting the crude world of material objects to which it gives the status of art.

The theorists of pop art maintain that every object, when put in a certain context, becomes a work of art, loses its initial significance and acquires artistic qualities. Hence the artist's task is not to create an art object but to lend artistic qualities to an ordinary object by organizing a certain context in which the object is perceived. Aestheticization of the world of things is a principle of pop art. Pop artists try to achieve ready appeal by using the style of labels and advertising posters. Pop art is a composition of everyday objects sometimes combined with plaster casts and sculptures. Crashed cars, compositions of faded photographs, scraps of newspapers and posters glued onto boxes, a stuffed hen under a glass cap, a worn shoe painted white electric motors, combinations of old tires and gas stoves – such are the paraphernalia of pop art. Pop artists specialize in specific "genres". Chamberlain, for example, has a passion for smashed cars, Oldenburg prefers *collage*. Dine goes in for interior decorations Rauschenberg, having attended a stage design school, has retained a preoccupation with the problem of organizing objects in space that is so important in the art of the stage. He arranges objects in a pattern of "artistic chaos". Rauschenberg also introduced a style which is accompanied by sound tracks. His favourite method is a montage of photographs with

scraps of newspapers, paintings and old objects. Pop art has a number of subrends: op art (artistically organized optical effects, geometric combinations of lines and patches), el art (electric-driven objects and structures), environment art (compositions surrounding the viewer), etc.

Op art shifts the emphasis from the world of objects to the environment and the atmosphere surrounding man. A special aesthetic environment is created with the help of light and colour optical devices using lenses, mirrors, stroboscopes, vibrating metal plates and wires. That helps the artist to achieve a higher degree of abstraction from concreteness.

Op art linked pop art with the tradition of geometric abstractionism, with the Bauhaus school and constructivism. In 1963 a huge composition of shining copper wire was on display at the national museum in Washington. That typical op art work depicted the sun which was at the focus of a copper web, "the sky". The composition swayed gently from the slightest wiff of air with the thin copper threads producing a thousand colours.

In 1964 an exhibition of pop art was mounted at the national museum in Amsterdam next to the halls where Rembrandt's paintings hung. One of the specimens on display showed a three-leaved mirror standing against the wall with all the female dressing-table accessories laid out (perfume, powder compact, powder puff, a manicure set). In front of the mirror was a hassock. All the objects were real except the white plaster figure of a woman sitting on the hassock. She held a real comb in her hand with which she was combing her gypsum hair. The composition derives its tension from the contrast between real objects and the gypsum figure.

Another exhibit gives an idea of *el art*. A complex mechanism looking rather like a magnified version of a clock stands on a pediment in the middle of the hall. Only it is an infinitely more complex arrangement of wheels, gears, bolts and drives than one finds in an ordinary clock. Hidden inside the structure is an electric motor. The viewer approaches the work of art, presses a button thus participating with the author in the creative process. The contraption comes to life: the wheels begin to rotate, transmitting movement higher and higher until the thin pistil-like rod at the top begins to revolve slowly above the viewer's head. As it rotates, a little bell on its end produces a deliberately cracked sound. After completing a few circles the pistil comes to a standstill and the mechanism stops until the next viewer presses the button to set it in motion.

Some of pop art has influenced the design of consumer goods and elements of it are used in the lay-out of shop windows. Pop art has advanced its

conception of the individual in the consumer society. Its ideal individual is an avid consumer of mass products whose ideology is furnished by the still lives of combinations of goods. Words substituted by goods, literature ousted by things, beauty replaced by utility, the thirst for material consumption replacing spiritual needs – this is pop art. That trend is consciously aimed at a mass uncreative individual devoid of independent thinking and borrowing "his" ideas from advertising and the mass media. Such an individual is programmed by pop art for fulfilling the assigned role of buyer and consumer who bears the alienating influence of modern civilization without a murmur. Pop art acclaims a deideologized individual. As a rule it ignores social issues. The "father figure" of pop art, as he is dubbed in the USA, is Andy Warhol. He has embraced as his aesthetic principles such features of advertising as catchiness and stridency, banality, primitivism, appeal to the average individual and moulding of such an individual. Pop art's aestheticization and idealization of the material thing is not without precedent in art. One can recall, for example, the still lives of the "Little Dutchmen" who glorified the beauty of things. They poeticized objects that were products of man's creative work. Pop art celebrates an object of "mass consumption" in a "mass society". That leads to a fetish of consumption, a cult of the thing. This is the distinctive feature of pop art. By glorifying the consumer, pop art poeticizes either a thing that is to be mass produced or a thing that has been used by man (compositions of scrapped gas stoves, tires and dressing-tables). Pop art makes no bones about advertising objects and asserting that civilization is geared to them. That is achieved through *collage* (as in Oldenburg's compositions) or with the help of interior designs (for example, a spade suspended on a chain in Dine's *Kitchen*). Another advertising trick of pop art is to show an old, worn and broken thing in order to promote new goods by contrast. The aesthetics of pop art then is always the utilitarian aesthetics, sometimes nihilistic but all the same promoting the fetish of the thing.

One branch of pop art comes close to the searches and social nihilism of "the new left" who find the meaning of life in wholesale rejection and its aim in universal and collective ecstasy. The most-popular arts with "the new left" are those that work the audience into a frenzy of delight which they believe offers emotional release for "revolutionary potential" restrained by the daily environment in an act of revolt against all forms of alienation. It is not by chance that pop music with its impact on the mass audience is increasingly a model of the social functioning of art. There is a scene in Antonioni's

film *Blow-Up* which portrays the collective orgy of pop music fans. The youth audience gradually warms up to the mad rhythms, the expression, the assault of the pop musicians on their senses. Their heads, shoulders and arms begin moving in time with the music. The movement grows until the audience is caught in a mass ecstasy, eyes shining with the delight of being involved in a collective act of revolt. They yell and scream. One of the musicians is so carried away that he begins slapping his guitar until it breaks. He then throws it away and the crowd of frenzied teenagers scramble for it. The film's hero, literally at the risk of his life, snatches the finger board and runs towards the exit pursued by pop fans. When he breaks away from his pursuers he looks at the useless fetish in cold surprise and throws it on the pavement where it lies under the feet of indifferent passers by. The episode in Antonioni's film highlights the essence of "aesthetic revolt" as a means of involving the youth in the orgy of "mass consumption" and mass alienation. Even the anarchic revolt of the hippy through phoney rejection of materialism is but a negative form of the consumer mentality: man can only reveal himself through his attitude to things. It is a temporary protest which is expected to end with the return of the prodigal son to the paternal embrace of consumerism.

AESTHETICS: THE FUTUROLOGY OF ART The Science of Forecasting the Future of Art

SUBJECT. AIMS AND METHODS OF FORECASTING ARTISTIC CULTURE

Why Is the Futurology of Art Necessary?

Modern man is immersed in the stream of life and is often unable to get out of it and look into the future. So fast is the pace of modern life that he does not even have time to look around him in the present. That is worrisome, for mankind needs to take a long hard look at the trends of modern life and visualize the future in order not to be taken unawares.

If you do not think about your future there will be none. The future matures in the present. These ideas could well provide the motto for the new science of prognostication (futurology). Its roots go back to prophesies, to socio-political, cultural and economic Utopias. In an 18th-century Utopia *L'an deux mille quatre cent quarante* (The Year Two Thousand-and-Forty) the French writer and Enlightener Louis Mercier wrote: "Oh the revered and sacred year of universal happiness which, alas, I have seen only in my dreams! Your turn will come, eternity will deliver you from its loins and those for whom the sun will then be shining, will casually trample underfoot my remains, and the remains of succeeding generations which will be engulfed by the abyss of death one after another.... Thought is more lasting than man. In this lies its great advantage! " One notes in these general propositions that spiritual culture is singled out as the enduring, intransient sphere. It is in a way a sound prognosis based on a fundamental truth: the surrogates of man's making will be consigned to oblivion, but genuine spiritual and artistic values are immortal and mankind needs them if it is to continue as a genus.

However, in addition to such global and sweeping ideas about the development of culture one needs to know its shorter-term future, its lines of evolution, the nature of artistic demands and their dynamics. It is the business of the prognosticator to grapple with these particular and concrete problems. Recent decades have seen the isolation of a special scientific discipline which concerns itself with the trends in artistic culture and methods of controlling its development. Unlike former conceptions of future art arising from a logical analysis of the functioning of art, prognosticators today do not only aim to construct a conceptually coherent model of the future but are working towards the solution of the practical tasks of today and tomorrow. These tasks include meeting consumer demand, extending the network of cultural

institutions, allocations to different branches of culture, determining the norms of consumption of art culture and other related matters. That range of problems involves planning and administrative tasks and the search for scientifically valid recommendations for cultural development.

Artistic culture comprises all the phenomena and problems that have to do with the practical functioning of art in society: first, there is art production, second, art consumption, third, the storing, disseminating and social distribution of art values, fourth, the control of artistic activity, storage and consumption of its products. The term "artistic culture" implies a broad study of art. And that brings up the question that is essential for the job of forecasting: what theoretical foundation could furnish a coherent idea of the actual development of art and its trends? Which factors should be taken into account and what tradition should be used as a point of departure?

The concept of artistic culture is an important methodological achievement of modern science. Formerly aesthetics usually concerned itself only with the creation of art, linking the essence of art only with the problem of the artist and his work and looking for answers in the study of artistic activity to the subjective world of the artist. The nature of art was explained in terms of the psyche, the innate soul, the capacity to intuit which an artistically gifted person possessed. Artistic values were conceived as something created within the space defined by the relationship between the artist and his product.

Many questions pertaining to the functioning of art fall outside the range of problems traditionally studied by aesthetics and demand urgent policy and administrative decisions. These are cardinal problems and they must be included in forecasting.

Present-day prognostic studies of artistic culture include social, demographic, economic and other aspects and take into account various forms of artistic activity. The prognostication of artistic culture also includes a scientific study of the prospects of its development (information on probabilities in the future).

Samuel Lilley, a noted English futurologist, stressed that on average 80 per cent of the forecasts made in the early 20th century have been proved right. That level of accuracy is high but not high enough. Lilley stresses that the only real way to improve forecasting is to plan. Forecasts in the field of artistic culture precede plans and assess the feasibility and consequences of the plans. Forecasts are wider than plans. Both forecasts and plans are made for any period, short or long. The difference between forecasts and plans lies in the mode of concretization of the prognosis. A forecast predicts: it describes a

possible or desired future. A plan is prescriptive: it describes the measures that have to be taken to achieve a possible or desired result.

Every prognosis has two components: 1) studying the trends in the light of the needs to change it; and 2) concrete decisions that influence the cultural process.

The futurology of art must take into account different modes of interaction between tradition and new trends in art:

- 1) extending, improving and developing the tradition;
- 2) development by contrast (repudiation, development in "reverse" to established art tradition);
- 3) development on the basis of immediately preceding material;
- 4) development on the basis of material "across a period" (the traditions of "grandfathers" and not of "fathers");
- 5) the synthesis of different trends and traditions.

The futurology of artistic culture proceeds from three models: the target, the actually existing model, and the planned model. The latter is an intermediate stage on the way from the actually existing to the target model. That makes possible a scientifically valid control of the artistic and cultural process.

Futurological prognosis helps to solve many economic, logistical and administrative problems in the development of artistic culture. Hence the goal of art prognostication lies not only in presenting a picture of the foreseeable future but also in steering its development in the desired and scientifically valid direction.

The Subject and Methods of the Futurology of Art

What kind of society will the future generations live in? What "beautiful and furious world" will surround them? And what will be the place of art in that society? What will art be like? How will it function in the world to come?

What will be the structure and features of the artistic culture of the future?

These futurological questions are interconnected. Those of them which have to do with the destinies of artistic culture in the future constitute the subject of the futurology of art.

To understand that subject theoretically it is important to identify the body of theoretical premises from which prognostic studies can and must proceed.

The concept of the nature of art determines its futurology. Understanding the social forms and mechanisms of art consumption is also a major factor. This range of problems, traditionally the province of aesthetics, needs rethinking in

concrete historical terms with a view to making prognostic decisions.

According to established tradition in aesthetics, art, in its diversity of types, genres and styles can only be understood within the framework of a general philosophical theory of art, as part of an overall conception of the nature of art as a complex social phenomenon. As other disciplines (economics, sociology, etc.) took up the study, that aspect was not delineated and emphasized enough. The futurologists of art need to restore the historical continuity of problems and their solution.

The main trends in the prognostic study of artistic culture are a comprehensive approach to the study of the functioning of art based on an understanding of its nature, and a broad coverage of a multitude of diverse factors and parameters involved in the functioning of artistic values in society and the processes of their consumption and assimilation. Prognostic studies of artistic culture are expanding to include new areas.

The multiplicity of prognostic methods reflects the multiplicity of approaches and diversity of forms of artistic culture that have come under study (the cinema, theatre, library, museum, etc.). The structure of investigations reflects the historically established structure of artistic culture itself.

Every methodological concept and model of prognostication has its own methods, goals and applications (in the shape of administrative decisions, recommendations for planning, etc.), and its own methods of processing the initial material. The determining factor in prognostication is its goal of enhancing the social effectiveness of artistic culture. This overall goal is present in every concrete prognostic study in keeping with the problem in hand and the concrete tasks of the study. The global goal concretized for specific tasks determines all the other factors of prognostic studies (the methods of information processing, applications).

To be successful in forecasting artistic culture one must possess conceptual instruments: special methods (approaches, principles). There are about a hundred and fifty such methods in the futurology of artistic culture. But at present only a little more than a dozen have been tested in practical prognostication work.

One of the oldest "classical" methods of futurology is extrapolation which consists in revealing the trends in contemporary art and extending them into the future.

Extrapolation methods include probability assessments, assessments by analogy, the method of rounding curves, etc. Projecting observed trends into the future should be done with care since it is hard to determine how a given

trend would develop.

If trends are studied statistically only in quantitative terms, extrapolation may not yield a full and true picture of development. Statistics is unable to establish the existence and development of causal relations.

To carry out an extrapolation it is not enough to observe superficial trends in artistic culture. Extrapolation must proceed from a logically valid hypothesis, from a scientific knowledge of the essence of phenomena in artistic culture.

Prognostications lose in scientific validity if they are narrowly oriented to a particular factor or aspect of artistic culture. This must be borne in mind in interpreting data. A forecast based on what is "observable", "tangible" and "lies on the surface" may end up by producing pseudo-concrete results. Any one-sidedness in prognosticating artistic culture risks distorting the causal relationship between phenomena. For example, one cannot forecast the future of film art from cinema attendance trends, it is not enough to extrapolate these figures into the future.

There is little prognostic value in the studies of artistic culture prompted primarily by "departmental" or business interests which base their forecasts on money and other quantitative factors. A forecast of cinema attendance must be backed up by a study of all the positive and negative aspects of attendance. One must compare general statistical data on the evolution of artistic tastes and take into account the process of the forming of a rounded and harmonious individual. "Flattening" a forecast and projecting it onto one plane only creates a temporary impression of authenticity but later it is found to be at odds with reality. One should not make too much of the methods of mathematical data processing; substantive, logically valid criteria for prognostic judgements must be created.

The authenticity of a forecast depends to a large degree on awareness of historical experience and on the previous ways of studying of the object. The history of the object is a necessary and probably sufficient prerequisite for prognosticating its development. The history of the study of artistic culture is the basis for forecasting its development. The significance of history for prognostication is highlighted by the appearance of particular types of "retrospective" models of prognostication that are based on the study of the past development of an object. Historical-retrospective analysis of the phenomena and laws in the development of artistic culture may yield fruitful and accurate prognostic results.

A leap across the information gap may make it possible to anticipate the future. This is one of the remarkable qualities of the human mind. Given a

body of data and proceeding from our knowledge, previous experience and intuition, we can make a picture of the future.

One principle that is applicable only in art prognostication but not in the forecasting of other fields is "I want it to be that way". Art must take into account the wishes and demands of the reader, listener and viewer who has a specialized background. That principle is used in forecasting artistic culture through expert evaluations. A group of specialists are asked to answer a set of questions specially developed for the purpose of the study. These surveys can be individual and collective, *viva voce* or by correspondence, and may involve one person at a time or panels of experts.

The method of expert evaluation as used by the general theory of prognostication is not yet effective enough: expert judgements are often contradictory and offer mutually exclusive information. It remains to be determined how best to process and use these replies to obtain a valid forecast. The method of expert evaluation sometimes misfires because the phenomena of art are exceedingly complex and their perception by different individuals is not identical.

The prognostic method involving the study of "advanced" groups is methodologically promising. In every society demands for artistic culture, the capacity to absorb it, and the taste and ability to appreciate art are distributed unevenly among the different social groups. There are groups of highly cultured readers, listeners and viewers who are able to appreciate the highest artistic values and come nearest to true art in their demands. Such an "advanced" group furnishes a model in the study of the functioning of artistic culture in the society of the future.

The modelling of artistic-cultural processes (matrices, graphs, "tree of problems" and "tree of goals", the creation of mathematical models and the like) is important in art prognostication. The practice, theory and methodology of the prognostication of artistic culture are in their infancy. Its methods are being perfected. Prognostic studies of artistic culture have yet to yield a whole picture of its future development. So far they have offered fragments of the picture and preliminary data.

THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE OF ART

Eschatological Concepts of Art and Its Real Destiny in the Future World

The history of aesthetics has seen various concepts advanced about the fate of art which varied depending on the expressive means available to the various period and the changing cultural function of art. The authors of these conceptions tried to understand the underlying pattern in the development of art, the deep-going trends, the changes in its social role and cultural functions. They built then view of the future on theoretical-logical and conceptual models, on the distinction between the necessary and the accidental factors, and on their ideas of the nature of art.

The future of artistic culture has continued to engage the minds of many scholars. At the International Congress on Aesthetics in Athens the Italian scholar Guido Calogero said: "The world is full of poems we have not yet read. The treasure chest of art is inexhaustible, for it is the only good that is not destroyed through consumption." These reasonable statements however lead Calogero to the unjustified conclusion that future generations will not produce art; they will content themselves with the body of art created before them.

Aesthetic eschatology, predictions of the death of art have recently become fairly widespread. The claim to authorship of that concept was "staked" many centuries ago by Plato. He believed that in an ideal state art would be unnecessary and only philosophy and religion would remain. Even great Homer should be expelled from the ideal state, though not until after crowning him with a wreath of laurels.

Many aesthetic concepts deny that future society will need art. Hegel maintained that art, having passed three stages, has completed its development. These stages were first the so-called symbolic art (ancient Egypt), in which form prevails over content, then classical art (ancient Greece) which effects a harmony between content and form and then the Romantic art in which content prevails over form. After the Romantic period, according to Hegel, there will be no art, content liberates itself from the aegis of form and the era of pure reason begins.

Many "eschatological" concepts have been advanced. But none of them are true. Long after Hegel had said that art was ended it continued to give the world such names as Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Faulkner, Shaw, Fellini, Antonioni, Bergman, Bulgakov, Gorky and others.

Few people would opt for a world without art. And future generations would not be content with the art of the past. Every period needs to understand itself and its aesthetic ideals. Great and favourite works of the past may of course be a help in that. But only a fresh and contemporary look can explain the man of the new historical period. The experience of new human relations cannot be understood without a modern artist. Future people will need artistic interpretation of their complex and varied life. They would need their own artistic conception of the individual and the world. The art of the future will also face a novel challenge, for it will become a key stimulus to work.

Art awakens the creative impulse in man, who is capable of creating things of beauty in various fields of endeavour. In making a lamp, a table, a chair – strictly utilitarian objects, man wants them to be not only useful but also beautiful. Whatever trade he pursues, whatever material and intellectual values he creates, he is an artist. To awaken the artist in man means to awaken his creative instincts. Such a person feels a need to create. This is the law by which true artists, actors, poets have lived over the centuries. They could be left without means of livelihood but they could not be made to stop creating. They were driven by the "fire of the soul", the creative impulse.

And if every person in a future society lives and works according to the laws of beauty how greatly increased will be the function of art! It will foster a person's appreciation of beauty and his creative leanings. There will be a vastly increased demand for art and not a dying off of art as Guido Calogero and like-minded people assert. But to accomplish that task, the art of the future will have to overcome difficulties more formidable than it has ever encountered in the past. Odd though it may seem these difficulties stem from the rapid progress of science and technology in every area of life, including art itself. In the old days an artisan produced the whole object single-handed and fulfilled himself in it. So an artisan was an artist, like Colas Breugnon described by Romain Rolland. A cupboard or a table decorated with a grapevine etched in wood was a work of art embodying the spiritual world of a person. But it could be enjoyed only by two people, Colas Breugnon who spent half a lifetime making it and the fortunate nobleman who bought the masterpiece.

Machine-made cupboards have no artistic value. Standardization kills art. As a result people are deprived of aesthetic influence and aesthetic pleasure both as consumers and as producers of objects. You can put your soul into making a cupboard with your own hands, but it is hard to be inspired by a job that consists in screwing legs to tables. How to bridge that gap? Today almost all

kinds of manufacture involve the artist. A new plane, a new cupboard, or a new machine are made not only by engineers but also by designers. In future that alliance will be exceedingly important and the two trades may become one. All the objects surrounding us will acquire aesthetic value. But that is only one part of the problem. For even in the highest degree of automated production there remains the problem of organizing it in such a way as to make every worker feel like Colas Breugnon. Future people will live in a world of object-images. Thomas More in his *Utopia* asked, "will the people of the future be happy? " For the sense of happiness derived from the achievement of even the most coveted goal is short-lived. According to the Weber-Fechner Law sensations increase as logarithms of stimuli. In other words, a person's feeling of happiness passes if the situation that has caused it remains unchanged and is not enriched and expanded. Man is only happy if the situation that makes him happy grows and is enriched. Moreover, to make him truly happy the situation that causes happiness must develop at an ever faster pace and the factors causing it must reproduce themselves on an expanded scale. That human quality, that psychological mechanism of happiness will never let man rest and will propel him and the material and spiritual products he makes towards more progressive forms. In terms of happiness, any pause in the ascending line of human evolution, even a slow-down in the rate of cultural development, means regress and unhappiness. Man in the future will need a maximum level and pace of growth of demands and means of satisfying them. It is this psychological mechanism of happiness that provided the spring which enabled man to advance from stone weapons to space vehicles, from magical drawings scratched on a cave wall to Raphael's paintings, Shakespeare's theatre and Fellini's cinema. The same psychological mechanism of happiness holds out the promise of further scientific, technological and artistic progress, the growth of productive capacity, of energy, of technological prowess and knowhow, of a richer, broader and more accurate scientific picture of the world and of aesthetic values, artistic and cultural achievements. This exponential growth of modern culture and civilization is caused by and aimed at human happiness even though along the way to happiness mankind is capable of inflicting irreparable damage on itself and exposing itself to untold calamities. These calamities are a consequence of the inability to ensure extended reproduction of cultural values on a scale sufficient to maintain the feeling of happiness and attempts to compensate for it by seizing values from other people. All this creates breaks in the exponential development of human culture and

civilization and at times poses the danger of mankind's self-destruction. However, historically this development always retained an upward trend. This has many consequences and manifestations in the sphere of artistic culture. Let us dwell on some of them.

One of the laws of artistic culture is the growing number of its languages. This happens because the creative character of culture, its enrichment and expansion can only take place if there is at least a double "translation" of the original idea (for example, from one language into another and back). The growing number of languages in artistic culture accelerates the growth of the conceptual body of art. The growth of the number of artistic languages occurs above all through the birth of new types of art, the appearance of new interactions and syntheses of arts, the accumulation of expressive means within each of the arts. The trend towards expanding the semiotic parameter of culture is likely to continue into the future.

Another trend is the expansion of the communicative channels for dissemination of artistic culture which is also important for the future of art. It manifests itself not only in the emergence of new types of art but also in the emergence of technical arts (photography, cinema, television) capable of being mass communications media. One can discern a future trend in the expanding communications media at the disposal of artistic culture. The same trend manifests itself in the transition from oral culture to written culture, to book printing, the growing capacity of the printing industry to produce books quickly and in large editions, etc.

The trend towards enrichment and expansion of communicative channels can be observed in individual arts. For example, the cinema has only recently (in historical terms) acquired sound and with it a new channel of oral verbal communication with the audience. Music has obtained a channel of mass communication with the audience through the sound cinema, tape and disc recordings. Theatre as the audio-visual art has always relied on several channels of communication with its audience and these channels reveal a historical trend to multiply, and expand.

Types of Art and Their Future

The future will see architecture, an art whose influence no man can escape, assume a tremendous role. Many features of a future architecture have probably been anticipated by Le Corbusier, the famous French architect, and Oscar Niemeyer, who planned and designed Brasilia, the new capital of

Brazil.

The development of architecture depends to a large extent on technological progress. The availability of stronger and more flexible materials creates new possibilities for mastering space. The architect no longer has to be constrained to erect his bearing structures vertically and can direct load along any line his fantasy prompts him. Architects may turn to the beautiful and efficient forms that have been produced by nature and wildlife over millions of years. But it is not merely the question of technological progress.

Apparently in considering the future of architecture one must bear in mind a circumstance that will be extremely important for other arts as well. Already we can discern two opposite processes taking place in art. The first process is the birth of new types of art and the isolation of each type in a pure form. For example, the cinema has incorporated the previous experience of art and has gradually freed itself from dependence on stage methods, and from the forms of literature, painting and photography, and has developed its own laws. The same is happening with television. That process will continue.

At the same time there is the opposite process of the synthesis of arts and the birth of new ones as a result. One can cite the Czechoslovak group Laterna Magica whose performances blend ballet and colour photography, pantomime and cinema. Synthesis of this kind will be one avenue for the future development of art. Synthesis can assume startling and incredible forms. This holds for architecture too. It will be even more closely allied to painting (as witnessed by the remarkable architecture of Mexico which freely draws on painting and mosaic). Future architects will, in their "buildings-images", use television, cinema, photography, and music.

Yes, music! After all, an old pagoda in Burma is girdled with silver bells.

When the wind blows the little bells produce a wonderful tinkling sound that seems to envelop the pagoda in a musical shroud. That remarkable structure was built in accordance with a yet to be formulated law of synthesis between architecture and music. Music will be used in architecture. Imagine houses and streets each with their own distinctive sound. In such a city houses will differ not only in numbers but also in their look and sound. Mayakovsky spoke about "the music of streets" and Alexander Green dreamed of such cities.

And what will cinema, television and photography be like in the future? That group of arts, like architecture, is certain to be heavily influenced by technological progress. Cinema, television and photography will master space, depth and perspective (think of the promising experiments in

holography and laser technology). It is technically quite feasible for these arts to include even smell in their expressive arsenal. A cinema-goer watching a tiger hunt will be able to smell the jungle, and gun powder. Such experiments have already been staged. It is still unclear however whether art needs such an addition and whether smell could be made an artistic vehicle. Many technical innovations are already feasible today. There exist, on an experimental basis, stereo films, 3D colour films, and 3D colour photographs. But volume and colour have not yet quite become artistic means, they remain technological experiments.

And yet one may recall the history of the sound cinema. Chaplin continued to make silent pictures even after the talking films came along. He did not begin to use sound in his films until he was satisfied that it had stopped being a technical possibility and became a means of art. Colour came into its own in the cinema when it became a means of conveying meanings that could not be conveyed in any other way. The potential of colour cinema has yet to be fully tapped. Stereo television, stereo film and stereo photographs too will at first be technical novelties, amusing gadgets, before volume will become a vehicle for conveying artistic messages.

Photography, colour cinema and television have influenced and will continue to influence painting. The individual vision of the artist and his original attitude to the surrounding world will become very important. The evolution of related "technical" types of art will indirectly cause painting to change its course. And not only indirectly. New paints, and the methods of multiplication have affected the visual arts and will affect them even more in the future.

Does this mean that technological influences on art will increase infinitely? That is unlikely because it is hard to imagine that the people who come after us would be happy to have an art that creates a perfect illusion of life and is even able to replace it. Ray Bradbury's story *The Veldt* describes a society in which children by pressing a button in their playroom could find themselves in the jungle with roaring lions. The jungle was so real that parents could not find their children in the thicket. Such degree of verisimilitude is not the aim of art. And it is not going to develop along these lines. Its aim is to understand life and shape a full and socialized individual, not to replace reality with pseudo-reality. Who would want to have a cinema illusion instead of a date with his beloved? But technological devices capable of materializing our fantasies, dreams and intentions into images would greatly benefit art and could even give rise to a new kind of art.

Serious changes are also in store for theatre as an art. The boxlike stage of the theatre will not remain as we are used to seeing it today. Theatre history has already seen attempts – some highly successful – to take the action into the hall and outdoors. One can recall the experiments of many stage directors. For instance, Okhlopkov in the Soviet Union, who gave serious thought to the future of the stage, teamed up with architects to design a theatre of his dream. The stage was to be easily transformed. In the course of one play and even one act it can change from traditional, to circular form placed in the middle of the hall surrounded by an amphitheatre of seats. In such a theatre the ceiling may open up on a starry sky, or the rear wall can be drawn back and actors would perform against the background of the trees surrounding the theatre. New architectural solutions of the interior, the stage and the auditorium will undoubtedly extend the possibilities of stage art. Theatre will welcome them. Even the Greek god Texmachon was not above using technical gadgets when he came down from heaven to sort out people's problems.

The theatre will not die fifty or a hundred or two hundred years from now simply because it enables viewers to observe art happening before their eyes. Nothing can replace this magic act. The audience sees the actor on the stage and the actor is aware of the breath of the audience. An invisible link springs up between him and the audience and mutual enrichment becomes a two-way process. The actor infects us with his creative elan and is inspired by our attention and emotional response. This feature, which distinguishes theatre from other arts, is a guarantee that it will never be absorbed by powerful technical rivals and will never die.

The theatre's potential lies in man, in the actor, in expanding his psychic, physical and creative potential. Art's role is not only cognitive, educational and aesthetic but also suggestive. Ancient art was particularly suggestive and was dominated by oaths, incantations, charms which were based on the now convincingly confirmed powers of the word to influence man's psyche.

The suggestive power of art reawakens in modern art at critical moments in the life of nations. For example, Russian poetry written during the Second World War sounds like incantations, charms and other ancient forms of suggestive art.

The suggestive potential can be used to a great effect by literature, drama and stage art in the future. For that, the actor will need to study the technique of hypnosis and telepathy.

The human individual will become increasingly complex. Art will seek to understand the individual, fathom him, to reflect him convincingly in its

images and influence the individual, help his socialization and uphold his intrinsic value. One can create an image of a person and stage a play using the physical influence method (the technique used by Stanislavsky in his "system") and the representation theatre technique going back to the theoretical premises of Diderot. Diderot said that an actor is a person who squeezes tears from the viewers' eyes by his brain. The former system is important for the psychological plays of Chekhov and Ibsen. The latter system, which harks back to Diderot's paradox of the actor, is relevant to the intellectual drama of Frisch, Durrenmatt, Brecht and Camus. In such a theatre the actors "act out" not the psychology of a person but a conception of life. The same is true of literature.

Some writers tend to concentrate on the psychological world of the individual while others lay out intellectual conceptions of the world. It may be that the literature and theatre of the future will see a merger of the intellectual and psychological trends. In the theatre that would demand a new technique, new personal qualities, a higher professional competence and cultural background. Such a theatre would require a new kind of director who is intimately acquainted with the complex "apparatus" of the acting technique and is competent in handling the modern technology of the stage. Most important of all, such a theatre would call for a director-philosopher capable of linking the situation on the stage with the state of the world at large. The director will need a global kind of thinking. Without it he would not be able to understand and reflect the fact that the life of an individual is increasingly linked with the destiny of the whole mankind. The artist would not be able to say anything about the individual, let alone about humanity as a whole because man lives in the magnetic field of humanity.

To be sure, in the future many conflicts that bedevil the present world will be resolved and many situations will recede into the past. But there will remain the conflict between Mozart and Salieri, there will remain Romeo and Juliet and Othello and Desdemona. People will live in a real "beautiful and furious" world in which there will always be "divinity, inspiration, life, tears and love".

AESTHETICS: THE MORPHOLOGY OF ART

The Branches of Artistic Creation: The Science of Their System

BRANCHES OF ART

Reasons for the Existence of Diverse Branches of Art

Art exists in its concrete types: literature, theatre, drawing, painting, sculpture, choreography, music, architecture, applied and decorative arts, circus, art photography, cinema, television. What is the source of this diversity?

Kant identified it as the diversity of the subject's abilities, Hegel explained it by the inner differentiation of the objective idea, the French materialists, by the differences between the art media employed by the musician, poet, artist, etc. Actually, Kant, Hegel and the French materialists reveal not the reason for the division of arts into branches but the consequences of that division. The real reason for the division of arts into branches is the diversity of the different branches of man's social practice in the artistic interpretation of the world which rests on the aesthetic richness of reality. The world historical practice of man has given rise to the richness of the human spirit, developed man's aesthetic sensibilities and his musical ear, and made his eye capable of appreciating the beauty of form and of deriving pleasure from beauty.

But does not the recognition of the objective historic richness of the world lead to the positing of specific musical, visual and other properties in reality?

Every type of art gravitates to certain aspects of reality more than to others.

As the object of the ear is different from that of the eye, hearing picks out different sides of the object than the eye. "For a musical heart everything is music," said Romain Rolland. But the music is born of the same world as that seen by the painter.

Romain Rolland describes how the musically gifted hero of his novel, Jean Christoph, "listened to the invisible orchestra, the singing round of insects turning frenziedly in the sun rays amidst the odorous pine trees, distinguished the fanfares of midges, the organ-like buzzing of bumblebees, the bells of wild bees vibrating in the tree tops, the divine whisper of the woods, the faint trembling of the leaves in the wind, the tender rustle and swaying of the grass like a whiff sending ripples over a limpid lake, like the rustle of a beloved dress that passes and dies away in the air. All these noises, all these cries, Christoph heard in himself. In the tiniest and greatest of these creatures there flowed the same river of life that washed him. He was of their

blood; their joys and sufferings evoked a fraternal echo in him, their force redoubled his – so a river grows from the hundreds of rivulets falling into it."¹ While the composer perceives the picture of nature with his hearing, a painter will perceive the same picture with his sight, enjoying not the sounds but the beauty of form, the play of lines, the colours, the soft transitions between light and shade, etc. The painter and the musician perceive the same object – the life of nature, which is near and dear to man and of which he feels himself a part – and reflect it in different branches of art through its different sides and manifestations. Yet in the end what is perceived and reflected is the same reality.

Mankind's artistic evolution involves two opposite processes. The first goes from syncretism (the undivided, fused artistic thought combining elements of dance, song, music, theatre and literature) to the isolation of individual types of art. One aspect of historical progress in art is the far from complete process of emergence and isolation of new types of art (the 20th century saw the emergence of cinema and television as arts). At the same time we witness the opposite process of the synthesis of arts (Laterna Magica in Czechoslovakia combines cinema, theatre, choreography, etc.).

Both the isolation of individual arts and the interaction of different and distinct arts once they have been isolated are fruitful for the development of art. Although the branches of art do reveal a certain tendency to combine and even merge, it is important that each of them should develop its specific features because they introduce something original in the aesthetic perception of the world and the artistic culture of mankind. The diversity of types of art makes it possible to perceive the world aesthetically in all its complexity and richness. There are no main and secondary arts, each possessing its strong and weak sides compared to other types.

The relationship between the arts, their closeness or remoteness from one another, their inner similarities, mutual attraction and rivalries are historically changeable. Hegel, for example, quite rightly predicted the possibility of a closer relationship between painting and music and the gravitation of sculpture to painting: "this magic of reflections may eventually become so prevalent as to make uninteresting the content of images by comparison, and thereby painting in the pure aroma and magic of its tones, in their opposition, mutual penetration and harmony will approach music to the same degree as sculpture in the later development of relief will begin to approximate painting."² The Hegelian prophesy was realized by the Impressionists whose

paintings were a music of light. They departed from literature-oriented plot painting to become more like music.

Applied Art

One of the most ancient and still developing types of art is *applied art materialized in everyday utensils made as art objects. These are objects produced not only for their use but also for their beauty possessing an artistic image which expresses their function.* The aesthetic impact of applied art affects us daily and even hourly. The objects surrounding us in our daily life and creating our comfort may attain the summits of art.

Applied art is national, being of its very nature born of the customs, habits and beliefs of the people and linked directly with the people's productive activity and life.

Applied art in the ancient world took the form of luxury objects (Ancient Egypt), beautiful and comfortable objects (Ancient Greece), objects marked by a more austere taste (Republican Rome). Medieval asceticism left its own imprint on applied art by making it purely constructive, rationalistically severe and utilitarian. In the later period of the feudal society applied objects combined decorativeness and structure. Furniture, costume and other applied art objects came to borrow the organ-like vertical lines and forms of architecture, and objects were more richly ornamented. The Renaissance epoch gave prominence to the unity of function and beauty. But for a long time yet objects possessed individual charm and uniqueness. They were individually made works reflecting the talent and personality of their maker, the artist and craftsman. The development of production in modern times increasingly erased the imprint of individuality on machine-made objects. But then the artist came into industry and industrial design began to flourish.

Circus

The circus is the art of acrobatics, balancing, gymnastics, pantomime, juggling, tricks, clowning, eccentric musical numbers, equestrian displays and animal taming.

The circus confronts the student of aesthetics with a very difficult problem: what kind of art is it? What are its specific features? And is it art? Perhaps it is art but it looks too much like spectacle.... Some students believe that eccentricity is the form of the circus which is as essential for it as rhyme is for poetry. But it would be wrong to determine the nature of the circus from its

form. No one would be satisfied with a definition of poetry as rhymed lines. Rhyme is not always a sign of poetry and eccentricity may not be the universal and essential property of the circus. One must identify the specific nature of its content, and to do that we must first consider the aim of a circus performance.

The first thing that strikes anyone who tries to determine the specific nature of the circus is its apparent "aimlessness", the absence of any utilitarian value in the numbers performed.

What is the point of teaching a lion to jump through a hoop? Who needs a dog who can bark as many times as the figure the tamer draws on a board? The lion will never become a fireman and the dog will never become a mathematician.

The clue to the nature of the circus has in principle been found by aestheticians when they developed the theory of applied art. An activity as "useless" as teaching a dog to turn somersaults has long been in existence. It is the manufacture of decorations. What is the utilitarian value of a necklace or a ring? What can be more useless than the jeweller's job? He polishes the diamond and makes it shine. But the diamond does not simply shine, it expresses man's mastery over nature. If man can polish the hardest mineral in the world – diamond – he is master of the whole kingdom of minerals and there is no stone in the world he cannot conquer. The "useless" work of the jeweller has a deep meaning and *raison d'être*: the values he creates are perceived as beautiful.

The art of the circus is in a way like that of the jeweller. The circus artiste is a jeweller not only because he must exhibit the same mastery, accuracy and filigree polish in his work but because his work is inherently similar to that of a person polishing a diamond. The tamer makes the king of beasts obey his will and thus demonstrates the boundless power of man over the animal kingdom. His work offers the most vivid, tangible and convincing demonstration of free and complete mastery of the world of living nature. If man can make a lion overcome his age-old instincts and jump through the fire then any animal will obey and serve man. If you can teach a dog to do somersaults, then you can surely make it guard the home or a herd and help you to hunt. The same meaning underlies the work of the acrobat whose dizzying flights celebrate man's mastery of space, his body, balance, etc. The circus artiste accomplishes a difficult task, he stretches the capacity of a thing to its limit and his work follows the laws of the eccentric. If the beautiful is a phenomenon man has complete mastery of, and the exalted is a phenomenon

man has not yet mastered completely, the eccentric is the sphere of virtuoso mastery of an object difficult to master.

Eccentrism in the circus is not merely a form but a kind of artistic content revealing the power of man over animals, space, and his own body, his feelings, i.e. illimitable power over the whole world. Marco Polo, a 13th century Venetian traveller, tells how Kublai Khan, the emperor of China, had banished all magicians and acrobats from his country. They were so numerous and so expert with their weapons that they scaled mountains and crossed deserts and conquered distant countries. The only explanation for the popularity of circus art is that it is vitally needed. The circus is a place where real dangers are overcome. The gymnast flies towards the trapeze over a real abyss. Triumph over fear, defying the impossibility which no longer spells death – this is the essence of circus and its difference from theatre.

But to solve a supremely difficult task, to conquer space, exhibit power over the animal world and one's own body is not enough to make a circus number. An athlete setting a record is also accomplishing a difficult task yet he is not a circus artiste even if he performs his act on the arena. The circus artiste does not only achieve almost supernatural results, but he creates an image of a person tackling a supremely difficult task, and gives an artistic performance due to rhythmical and organized nature of his number, the considered sequence of tricks and the communication with his partner. The aerial gymnast ending her number seems to be reluctant to let go of the bar. It may be a deliberate gesture or one prompted by her artistic intuition. But without such a "trifle" a tricky sporting exercise could never become a circus number. A trick becomes artistically expressive only when it acquires the impact of an image.

The circus differs from the theatre in that everything there is for real (real weights are lifted and real barriers are cleared). But both the stage and the circus share image and theatricality.

Circus is not about setting records but about the image of man demonstrating his prowess to spectators.

Architecture

After man learnt to make working tools his dwelling ceased to be a hole or a nest. It became a utilitarian structure that gradually acquired an aesthetic aspect. Building became architecture.

Architecture is the shaping of reality according to the laws of beauty in the building of houses and structures designed to cater to man's needs for housing and public

premises. Architecture creates an enclosed utilitarian-artistic environment distinct from nature, opposing the elemental environment and enabling people to use the humanized space in accordance with their material and cultural requirements. The architectural image is inseparable from the function of the structure and organically expresses its purpose. Defining the specific features of architecture, Lomonosov noted that architecture erects buildings that are comfortable to be lived in, beautiful to the eye and durable. Architecture is instrumental in creating part of the "other nature", the material man-made environment in which he lives and works.

Architecture tends to create ensembles. It is important that works of architecture should fit into the natural and urban landscape. For example, the new building of the Moscow University gains artistic expressiveness from the fact that it stands on the Lenin Hills overlooking Moscow and the wide expanse of the central Russian plain. The building of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which looks like an open book, also fits in well with the cityscape of Moscow.

The forms of architectural structures depend on geographical and climatic conditions, on the landscape, on the intensity of sunlight, on the likelihood of earthquakes, etc. Architects treat the natural environment differently depending on their tastes and principles of work, which are socially conditioned. The development of architecture depends on the social system, aesthetic ideals, utilitarian and artistic requirements of society. Architecture is linked more closely than other arts with the level of productive forces and technology. It combines art, engineering and construction. Perhaps no other kind of art requires such a concentration of effort and material resources as architecture. St. Isaac's Cathedral, for example, was built by half a million people over a period of forty years. Architectural works are created to last for ages. The people are the authors of the "stone book" and its "readers".

Architecture is a great stone symphony, a powerful creation of humanity and nations like *Iliad* is a result of combining the forces of a whole historical epoch. Architecture may be combined with monumental painting, sculpture, decorative and other arts. The architectural composition is based on a three-dimensional structure and organic interconnection of the elements of buildings or ensembles of buildings. The scope of a work goes a long way to determine the character of the artistic image, its monumental or chamber character.

Architecture does not reproduce reality, it is expressive rather than representational. The rhythm of spatial relationships and lines is an important

expressive means. A feature of all modern artistic structure is lack of rhythm in rhythm, dissonance in harmony and it is found in the most distinctive modern architectural endeavours such as the ensemble of the new capital of Brazil, Brasilia. Architecture was born in deep antiquity, at the final stage of barbarianism, when people began to build with an eye not only to utility but also to beauty.

In Ancient Egypt they built huge tombs in the shape of pyramids (the Great Pyramid of Cheops in Giza is 150 metres high) and temples with many powerful columns (each column in the Amon temple in Karnak is 20.4 metres high and 3.4 metres in diameter). This kind of architecture is marked by primitive geometric lines, the absence of joints, the incompatibility of size of the structure with the size of man whose individuality is crippled by the monumentality. These grandiose structures were created not to satisfy the material needs of the people but for religious worship and served to promote social organization of Egyptians under the despotic power of the Pharaoh.

The architecture of Ancient Greece is democratic in character. The shrines (for example, Parthenon) celebrate the beauty, freedom and dignity of the Greek citizen. There appear new types of public buildings – theatres, stadiums and schools. The architects follow the humanistic ideal of beauty formulated by Aristotle: the beautiful should be neither too large nor too small. Man is the footrule by which the beauty and size of buildings are measured. The Greek architects created the order system and other structures that had been seminal for the later development of architecture. The architects of ancient Rome made wide use of arch and vaulted structures made of concrete. They introduced new types of structures such as amphitheatres, forums, and triumphal archs reflecting the idea of the state and of military might.

In the Middle Ages architecture became the leading and most popular type of art. Its images appealed even to illiterate people. However, the people were denied the utilitarian use of the magnificent structures and led a cramped existence in squalid conditions. The lines of the Gothic cathedrals reaching up to the sky expressed the religious striving to reach god and the fervent earthly dream of the people about happiness.

Renaissance architecture developed the principles and forms of antique classics on a new basis. Classicism canonized the compositional devices of antiquity. Between the end of the 16th and the middle of the 18th centuries, the complex period that saw the emergence of nation states and bloody wars, the baroque style was prevalent. That style was marked by heavy ornament, complex articulation and spatial relationships, decorousness, emotional

elevation and exaltation and contrasting forms. Some baroque structures served to glorify and assert absolutism (e.g. the Versailles palace) and Catholicism (e.g. the Santa Maria della Vittoria church in Rome).

In the early 18th century the aristocratic tastes produced the style of rococo which originated in France and spread throughout Europe. That style was characterized by elaborate and profuse ornamentation, studiedly asymmetric and complex convoluted lines (the Sans Souci palace in Potsdam). The interiors featured lavish murals and large mirrors creating an illusion that the walls are light and immaterial.

In the second half of the 18th century rococo gave way to the monumental and massive empire style. Empire harked back to the tradition of classicism and the style of the epoch of the Roman emperors. It expressed the military might and grandeur of the state (for example, the grandiose L'arc de triomphe de l'Etoile in Paris which surpasses similar arcs of antiquity, and the Vendôme column, a replica of the Trajan Column in Rome).

Russian architecture occupies a notable place in world architecture. Its high points are marked by the kremlins, ensembles of fortresses, palaces, churches and public buildings. Russian architecture has produced some works of truly national genius (the Bell Tower Ivan the Great, St. Basil's Cathedral). The original Russian national tradition has manifested itself in wooden structures with clear constructive solutions and rich ornamental forms (for example the church at Kizhi). The "Russian baroque" architecture asserted the unity of the Russian state and upsurge of national life (for example, the Winter Palace and the ensembles of the Tsarskoye Selo by Rastrelli). The basic principles of Russian classicism developed in the 18th-19th centuries include clear and expressive image achieved through simple constructive and artistic means.

The 20th century brought new types of buildings: industrial, office, transport structures and multi-storeyed blocks of flats and entire residential areas.

Building was industrialized and involved the use of new materials and prefabricated blocks. That changed many aesthetic criteria in architecture and revealed new artistic expressive means. In town-building, the problem arose of giving artistic expressiveness to massive residential areas.

Architecture is described as the chronicle of the world: it speaks long after songs and legends have fallen silent and nothing reminds of a people irrevocably sunk in oblivion. The "stone book" records the periods of mankind's history in its pages.

Decorative Art

Decorative art is the aesthetic mastering of the environment surrounding man. It invades the everyday life of men and provides artistic decoration for the man-made environment: buildings, structures, interiors, squares, streets and roads. It serves to create beauty and convenience in and near residential houses and public buildings. A doorhandle, a fence, a window pane and a lamp can be works of decorative art.

Decorative art draws on the achievements of other branches of art, in particular painting and sculpture. Painting as art proper first existed as wall (cliff) drawing and was, strictly speaking, decorative painting before it evolved into easel painting. The same holds for sculpture. One kind of decorative art is monumental painting on a wall (fresco) which is blended with the architectural image. The name fresco derives from the name of the technique of painting in water colours on wet plaster (*al fresco*). Many of the greatest world art masterpieces (e.g., the frescoes of Rublyov, Michelangelo and Raphael) belong to the category of monumental decorative art.

Among the remarkable works of decorative art is the Stanza della Segnatura at the Vatican (the room where the Pope used to sign court papers). The ceiling and walls of the room carry paintings by Raphael on theological, legal, philosophical, scientific and poetic themes. The painting called *The Athens School* shows a meeting of ancient Greek philosophers and comprises almost fifty figures arranged with consummate composition and colouristic skill. The fresco is marked by strict harmony of colours. One of the secrets of its impact is that it forms part of the wall on which it is painted and lives according to the laws of perspective. The composition receding into the depth of the picture achieves striking impact.

Two rows of squares on the floor direct the beholder's eye into the depth of the picture. This unhurried solemn movement takes one up the grand staircase and finishes with a row of receding arches. In the foreground are the sitting and recumbent figures of philosophers. Further away several philosophers are seen walking up the stairs and Diogenes is lying on the steps. This effects a compositional link between the foreground and the background of the fresco. Finally at the centre there are the figures of Plato and Aristotle, the two towering giants of antique philosophy, shown against a blue sky.

A magnificent building, thought out and "built" by Raphael, organizes the composition and keeps its horizontal, linear plane and visual coherence in

spite of the receding perspective. So, the compositional, perspective and colouristic achievements of Renaissance art contributed to monumental decorative art perpetuating the humanistic ideals of the Renaissance. Decorative art is the art of decoration, but not over-decoration. It helps to create a whole architectural ensemble. Works of decorative art are not dead symbols but a living saga of human deeds, strivings, emotions and plans. They express the style of a historic period to the highest degree. An art student and an archeologist can restore the image of a historical period from a fragment of a doorhandle or a piece of a mural with the same accuracy as paleontologists restore the look of a long extinct animal and its environment from a single tooth.

Painting and Drawing

Painting is the portrayal, in two dimensions, of the real world transformed by the artist's imagination.

The ancient artist did not perceive the beauty of the landscape. Tyior, the English ethnographer and archeologist, pointed out that one area of painting in which modern artists undoubtedly surpass the ancients is landscape painting. In the old days, he writes, no matter how wonderfully the figures were painted, the rugged rustic mountains, woods and houses in the background were still in a state close to ideographic writing, they rather symbolized the external world than depicted it as it was. The attention of the primitive artist-hunter was concentrated on what provided his livelihood. He was a magnificent animalist.

In ancient painting the relationship between the phenomena portrayed was semantic rather than spatial. An ancient cave on the island of Cham in the Gulf of Carpentaria has a painting, on a white wall in black and red, of kangaroos pursued by thirty-two hunters. The third one is twice as tall as all the rest because he is the chief. Artists in Ancient Egypt too painted the figure of the military commander several times larger than those of his soldiers. Those were the early compositional accents made by artists who did not know linear or spatial perspective.

In the Renaissance period the compositional accents formed into systems of principles. Various arrangements of figures on the picture revealed their mutual relations, characters and interaction. The composition acquires depth. In antiquity drawing and painting were close to each other and to literature. Ancient Chinese and ancient Egyptian art revolves around narrative. A painting was more often than not a sequence of events, a story told through a

series of figures. Yet even at that early stage painting makes it possible to express different points of view on the subject in two dimensions. Ancient Egyptian artists painted both eyes on a face shown in profile, and in South Melanesia paintings show planes that are hidden from view: a disc above the head represents the back of the head, or else there is a double face conveying the "all-round view".

Medieval painting presented a conventionally flat picture of the world, the composition being based not on the distance to the object from the observer's eye but on its meaning and significance. These are the features of Russian icon paintings.

In the Renaissance period painting flourished and became the leading art. It seemed to be the best medium for expressing the anti-ascetic, anti-scholastic pathos of the epoch, the rejoicing in the richness of life, its spiritual and sensuous beauty (Botticelli's *Spring*). Painters came to convey the anatomical difference of people of different ages (the child held by Madonna Litta in Leonardo's painting is not a dwarf but a real child) and the anatomy of the moving human body.

Renaissance artists asserted the universal human relevance of painting which did not, like literature, need translation (Raphael's *Madonna*). Leonardo da Vinci wrote: "... if the poet serves reason by way of the ear, the artist does so by way of the eye which is more worthy of emotion. I would not wish for more from either of them that a good artist should portray a fierce battle and a poet describe another battle and that the two should be displayed side by side. Then you will see where the spectators would linger more, where they would argue more, where there would be more praise and which picture would be more satisfying. Of course, the painting, being far more useful and beautiful, will be liked more.... Choose a poet who would describe the beauty of a woman to her lover and choose a painter who would paint her and you will see which way nature will incline the enamoured judge."

The Renaissance laid the foundations of colouristic composition which accents attention on the central message of the picture through light and colour (*The Lady with an Ermine* by Leonardo da Vinci is a vivid example). Rembrandt in his portraits uses the dark background to accent by light the most expressive parts of man, his face and hands. They seem to project themselves from the darkness that might at any moment engulf the person. Such colouristic composition comes from Rembrandt's deep brooding over the human condition.

The Renaissance discovered the laws of perspective and even, more broadly,

the free handling of space. The ideas of the perspective were developed by Brunelleschi and Alberti who taught their pupils to organize the space in a painting like a truncated pyramid of rays coming from the object to our eye. The mastery of space is expressed not only in perspective (for example, Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*) but also in "dematerialized" space. In *Sistine Madonna* Raphael portrays a woman who steps on rubble without looking under her feet. The spatial dematerialization effect is achieved by shifting perspective: two angels facing the spectator are in the foreground in front of the madonna but they look up at her. By all the laws of perspective they cannot be looking at the madonna because she is behind them, but they are living in a dematerialized space and are witnessing a miracle, the appearance of a woman bringing God in her hands, so the impossible is possible. The 19th century saw a deepening and final division of painting and drawing. Drawing dealt in linear relations. In reproducing the form of objects, it conveys their lighting, the relationship between light and shade, etc. Painting records the real relationships between the colours of the world, it is in colour and through colour that it expresses the essence of objects, their aesthetic value and assesses then social significance and their harmony or disharmony with the surrounding world. The fundamental difference from drawing is readily apparent in impressionist painting. It conveys nothing outside colour, all the linear elements being secondary. Not the outline but the colour relationships between the objects portrayed become the vehicles of the aesthetic message of the paintings. Painting becomes independent of drawing which used to be its main aim. Painting moves towards music and away from literature. Painting has mastered light, it portrays the colour of light and half-light, mist, air, shadow and semi-shadow. The paintings of Claude Monet showing London fogs capture the finest shifts of colour. The very composition in painting becomes colouristic (for example, the paintings of Vincent van Gogh, Renoir, Manet, Toulouse-Lautrec). In modern painting, according to Picasso, every stroke of the brush has become a precise operation, like the movements of a watchmaker.

For instance, if you paint the beard of a character and the beard is red, the red colour makes you rearrange everything in the ensemble, repaint everything around – it is like a chain reaction. In the 20th century the character of painting changed sharply. The artist's view of the world was influenced by the advent of photography and cinema, the development of technology, the breadth and profusion of impressions and the deepening of the intellectual and psychological world of man. That brings the desire to portray the object

in a cinematic way, as if seen from different and moving points of view. The advent of photography and colour photography confronted the artist with new challenges. To simply record an object for memory is something far better done by photography. In the 20th century the subjective element in painting becomes more important and this means the significance of personal vision and individual perception of life (think of *March Snow* by Grabar).

Sculpture

Auguste Rodin, portraying the hand of God, made it the hand of a sculptor kneading clay. The sculptor's work indeed brings associations with the legends about the creation of the world. *Sculpture is a spatial-visual art interpreting the world in plastic images in materials capable of conveying the real-life look of phenomena.* Sculpture is cut from marble, granite and other stone, from wood, or moulded from clay. Soft materials are considered to be temporary and it is understood that later on they will be cast in more durable iron or bronze. Modern times have seen the introduction of many new materials suitable for sculpture such as steel, concrete, plastics, etc.

Man is the main though not the only object of sculpture. Animalists sculpt figures of animals. A round sculpture may recreate only details of the environment. Such sculptures as bas-relief and haut-relief have much in common with painting and drawing, and landscape is within their range. Sculpture always conveys movement. Even complete rest is treated in sculpture as inner movement, as a state that has duration in both space and time. A sculpture of a dead body conveys hidden movement as final peace or the last throes frozen forever. Such is the portrayal of the dead Christ on the lap of the Virgin in Michelangelo's sculpture *Pietà*. Movement slumbers in the body of God-son drooping from the mother's lap and at the same time seeming to resist that lifeless drooping.

The sculptor can portray only one moment of action, but it carries the imprint of everything that has preceded it and will follow. That lends sculpture dynamic expressiveness. The sculpture is always perceived in time and in a sequence. That helps to portray movement and the sculptor takes advantage of it in the composition. The round view, change of position and angle of vision reveal various sides to the three-dimensional figure. Thus, the dying slave in Michelangelo's work is trying to rise, and the viewer is ready to believe that he will succeed, but that impression is dispelled when one looks at the sculpture from a different angle and sees the listless sinking torso. Another change of angle revives hope. So the slave, doomed to death, tries for

ages to rise, but falls again and again.

Monumentality is an organic part of sculpture that ensures its synthesis with architecture. A characteristic example of an ensemble of sculpture and architecture is the Medici tomb in Florence created by Michelangelo. The ensemble includes the figures *Morning* and *Evening*.

A male figure symbolizes evening. The man half reclines on one arm, the other arm resting listlessly on his thigh, the right foot is slipping and the head is drooping on the left shoulder. The half-lying female figure depicting morning is lifting herself up on an arm like a person stretching after sleep.

The two legs of the still sleepy figure already rest firmly on the bed. A person falling asleep and a person awakening – this is the direct plastic meaning of the figures. But they have a wider implication. It is the awakening and slumbering of the human spirit, its sinking into eternal sleep, dying and rebirth. The generalized, richly symbolic images of Michelangelo represent not only the times of day but the periods of human life and the states of mankind. Sculpture is by its nature capable of broad generalizations. Pushkin noted that painting a sculpture would make it less striking than a monochromatic one by robbing it of its generalized meaning.

The expressive means on which sculpture relies are light and shade. The planes and surfaces of a sculpted figure, by reflecting light and casting shadows, create a play of forms in space exerting a profound aesthetic impact on the spectator. While a bronze sculpture allows of sharp contrasts between light and shade, translucent marble makes it possible to convey the fine play of light and shade. The ancient artists made every skilful use of that quality of marble. The tender rosy and slightly translucent marble in the *Venus of Milo* conveys the tenderness and resilience of female flesh with amazing skill.

Sculpture is one of the oldest arts. Its early monuments go back to the Paleolithic age. In Ancient Egypt sculpture was closely linked with the cult of the dead. The religious belief that the soul is alive as long as a person's image is preserved led artists to make sculptures from various durable materials (cedar of Lebanon, granite, red porphyry and basalt). Ancient Egyptian sculpture is monumental and prefers simple and static figures. Sculpture reached a high point in Ancient Greece. It is not by chance that Hegel associated the classical (antique) period of art with sculpture. Antique sculpture invariably conveys a sense of inner freedom. The hero is unselfconscious and always keeps his dignity, even suffering does not distort his facial features and does not violate the harmony of the image (for example, *Laocoon*).

The Middle Ages saw the development of monumental sculptural forms in synthesis with architecture. Gothic sculpture combined naturalistic detail with ornamentation and dynamism expressive of the intense life of the spirit. These are also illusory-phantasmagoric, allegorical images (as the chimeras in the Notre-Dame de Paris). The Renaissance sculptors created a gallery of highly individual sculptures of strong-willed, energetic and active people.

Baroque sculpture (17th century) was pompous and ceremonial, full of the picturesque play of light and shade and riotous, unbridled, swirling masses. The sculpture of classicism, by contrast, was rationalistic, calm, dignified, marked by noble simplicity. In the 18th century sculpture developed an interest in the socio-psychological characteristics of man. In the 19th century realistic forms of sculpture became established and flourished. Sculptors created multifaceted portraits of people. The images acquired historical concreteness and psychological characteristics.

In the 20th century, while maintaining the realistic tradition, sculptors have striven towards a more generalized, sometimes symbolic approach. Sculpture is evolving, but not towards a more accurate depiction of the human body (one cannot do better than the ancient Greeks). The psychological content of the portrayals deepens and their expression of the spiritual life of historical epochs broadens.

Literature

Literature aesthetically masters the world through artistic use of language. Its subject has tended to gradually but steadily expand. Today it concerns itself with natural and social phenomena, dramatic social upheavals and popular movements, the spiritual world of the individual and his feelings. Depending on its genres, literature addresses this material through dramatic perception of reality, an epic narrative of events, or lyrical confession.

Hegel noted the unique capacity of literature to involve both thoughts and the external forms of phenomena and thus encompass both exalted philosophy and natural being.

To exercise their impact, the performing arts (music, choreography, theatre) need an artist to convey the images of the creator to the audience. The non-performing arts (sculpture, painting) do not need a creative intermediary between author and audience. In the beginning literature was a performing art as it only existed in its oral form. With the appearance of the written word its performative forms continued (folklore) but the mainstream of literature

became non-performative.

Literature is historically changeable. That proposition is often understood to mean the change of the life, philosophies and ideas of its authors, as the emergence of new artistic means, methods and forms. But that is not all. The very nature of literature is a historical phenomenon, all the elements and components of a literary work and the literary process, all the features of literature are constantly changing. Literature is a living artistic system reacting sensitively to changes in life.

The development of literature is the interaction of stability and change, continuity and innovation. The very historical changeability of literature presupposes a "conservative" element. Changes in literature do not destroy its nature nor lead to it being replaced by philosophy, as Hegel predicted. There are eternal elements inherent in the very nature of literature. For example, a person's life in the midst of the people and the life of a people in the world, i.e. man and society in their interaction, are an eternal theme and object of literature. A constant ideal of genuine literature is the happiness of people, the development of society not contrary to or at the expense of the individual but through the individual. And image and beauty are its eternal form.

The word is the eternal building material of the literary image. The word inherently includes image as its element. Language created by the people draws on the whole of its experience to become a form of thought. The historical process of the evolution of language involving transfer of similar features from one phenomenon to another has lent it an associative vision of the world and equipped it for the artistic portrayal of reality.

Hegel described the word as the most pliable material that directly belongs to the human spirit. In the literary work the word is flexible, mobile, changeable and definite in its meaning. Many legends celebrate the power of the poetic word. A Greek myth has it that the bards Orpheus and Amphion tamed wild beasts and moved trees and stones with their songs. Trees followed Orpheus to the desert to become groves. And Amphion made stones build themselves into city walls by his songs.

The flexibility and infinite expressive opportunities of the word place the artistic content of any art within the range of literature. The images of other arts can be translated into the language of literature. Leo Tolstoy in *War and Peace* creates an almost visual choreographic image when describing the dance of Natasha Rostova, and Victor Hugo in *Notre-Dame de Paris* reproduces an architectural image.

Literary works sometimes approximate to scientific treatises in verbal form.

For example, memoirs of the scope of Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts* are on the borderline between literature, history and philosophy and contain a philosophy of history. But while a scientific idea can be paraphrased, a literary thought can only be accurately expressed in certain words arranged in a certain sequence. Individual sciences isolate *one* aspect of the object or phenomenon.

Unlike science fiction literature takes the phenomenon in its entirety, in the real intertwining of its various qualities and features. So, unlike science, every sentence in a fictional work is the only one possible, as it were, and nothing can be changed in it without damage to the expressiveness and message of the work. Literary images reflect phenomena in a fused way, and the finest shades of speech may be all-important. This quality of the literary image accounts for the difficulty of translating literary fiction from one language into another. The verbal form of literature enables it to express not only aesthetic but also socio-political ideas, and to establish intimate links with philosophy, politics, morality and other forms of social consciousness. Literature occupies the leading position in the arts and exerts an essential influence on their evolution.

Theatre

Theatre is an art that presents the world aesthetically through dramatic action performed by actors before spectators. The basis of theatre is dramaturgy. At the same time it includes painting, sculpture, sometimes architecture (in the sets), and sometimes cinema, music and dance. The synthetic nature of theatrical art makes it a collective art involving the efforts of the playwright, director, set designer, composer and actor.

In the early stages of theatre the dramatist and the performer were often the same person. Subsequently however the ensemble became the main principle of the play. The director assumed the dominant position in the group creating a play. He not only directed the actors but interpreted the dramatist's conception, translated the play into a stage performance and directed its whole course.

The "building material" of the theatre is the living person of the actor. It is through the actor that the playwright and the director realize their conceptions. He involves and confers theatricality on every object on the stage. One can reproduce with absolute accuracy the interior of a room, a landscape, a city street but all the decor would remain a sham unless the actor brings it to life by the truth of his stage behaviour. Indeed, the most

perfunctory indications of the environment (which need to be no more than tablets with the words "garden", "steppe" or "palace", as in the Shakespearian theatre) will work if the actor has succeeded in identifying himself with a person in a corresponding setting. The actor's craft demands a specific kind of talent – observation, concentration, a skill in selecting and generalizing life material, imagination, memory, temperament and such expressive tools as good enunciation, intonational range, mime, plastic movement and gestures, etc.

An important feature of the theatre is that the creative act (the creation of the image by the actor) takes place before the eyes of the spectators. That gives the theatre tremendous influence on the minds of the audience. In the cinema the spectator sees the result of the creative process while in the theatre he sees the process itself. This goes a long way to explain the fascination of the theatre. The actor alters every performance of the same role in keeping with his observations on life, his reflections and the reaction of the audience to his previous performances. At the same time the theatre has a smaller audience than the cinema because it cannot multiply its plays in hundreds of copies. A filmed play loses a great deal, particularly contact between actor and audience, the creative act before the audience.

The theatre goes back into deep antiquity. Its key elements were already present in primitive rituals, totemic dances, the imitation of the ways of animals, etc. Theatrical rituals often involved special costumes, masks, tattooing and painting of the body. In the antique world the theatre had a large audience, sometimes as many as fifteen thousand people. The performance in ancient plays unfolded against a natural background remaining, as it were, part of life. That lent a natural and immediate character to ancient theatre.

In the Middle Ages the theatre evolved in two forms: the popular and the official-religious. The latter originated from the liturgical drama performed as part of the church service. In the 13th and 14th centuries there appear church genres independent of church service such as mystery and miracle plays in which popular motives and ideas had some place. The democratic line in the development of the theatre was represented by the independent art of the people pursued by troupes of itinerant actors. The 15th century saw the rise of the most democratic genre of the medieval theatre, farce, which wittily reproduced period life and mores.

The Renaissance saw the appearance of popular forms of theatrical art permeated with the spirit of humanism (the Italian comedy of masks), and the

theatre was invested with deep philosophical content. It made comments on the state of the world (Shakespeare) and provided a weapon in the acute social struggle (Lope de Vega). The Classical theatre (17th century) was based on the prescriptive aesthetics of Boileau and rationalistic philosophy (Descartes). It had the benefit of great tragedies (Racine, Corneille) and comedies (Moliere) which sought to create ideal heroes and ridicule human vices. The actor portrayed the human traits of the characters without regard for concrete historical or national features.

In the 18th century Enlightenment ideas (Diderot, Lessing) penetrated art, and theatre became a vehicle for the social struggle of the third estate against feudalism. Actors tried to portray the social position of their characters; the theatre acquired realistic features. In the 19th century the theatre became more democratic and popular forms developed. There appeared theatres for the populace: the "boulevard" (Paris) and "small" (New York), and the theatres of the suburbs (Vienna). In the first half of the 19th century the romantic theatre became widespread. It was marked by emotionalism, lyricism, a rebellious spirit and sharply delineated characters. In the 1830s critical realism became the prevalent trend on the basis of the plays of Gogol, Ostrovsky, Chekhov, Ibsen, Shaw. The theatre acquired distinctly national features. The Russian stage art of the 19th century was a realistic theatre raising acute social problems, critical of reality to the point of satirical exposure, a theatre of types and psychological analysis of the personality.

The Soviet theatre was heir to the realistic traditions of the classical art. It enriched them with new forms of stage thinking by producing a brilliant galaxy of actors and directors.

Stanislavsky contributed much to the development of stage art. His system offered a pattern of stage behaviour that led to the actor identifying himself with the character totally. By contrast, Meyerhold and Vakhtangov advanced the principle of "alienation" of the actor from his role, the performer and the character did not merge but remained at a distance from one another so that the actor could express his attitude to the character he was playing.

Vakhtangov's production of *Princess Turandot* broke new ground by allowing the actor alternately to merge with the character and to distance himself from it.

Important new developments in the theatre were associated with the names of Pogodin, Lavrenev and Vishnevsky who introduced elements of cinematic thinking in the stage art (rapid succession of episodes, headlong rush of action, mass scenes reflecting the role of the people in the historical process,

etc.).

The art of representation and the art of impersonation are the two principles of stage acting. The former is, today, primarily associated with intellectual theatre and the latter with domestic drama and, most important, the psychological theatre. Pushkin saw the main feature of the psychological theatre in the truth of passion, and the authenticity of feelings in the circumstances offered.

There exist different types of rockets: air to air, ground to air, air to ground. In these names the first word denotes where the flight begins and the second its direction. In the same way, one could denote different types of theatre as feeling – feeling (the plays of Blok), feeling-thought (the drama of Chekhov and Stanislavsky's directorial principles), thought – thought (the principles of Brecht's epic drama) and thought – feeling (the plays of Albert Camus).

In Chekhov's drama, which has its classic analogue in the Stanislavsky system, action evokes feeling, and feeling provokes thought. The feeling experienced by the actor must be vivid and emotionally infect the spectator, it must evoke an echo in his heart, awaken "similar affections", to use Aristotle's words. The spectator must feel in a way similar to the way the actor feels (empathy). Directing the spectator's emotions in a certain way, the theatre directs his thought.

Brecht's epic theatre is built on the rationalistic principles of the enlightenment theatre of Diderot as set out in his *Paradox of the Actor*. To Diderot, the actor is a great pretender who sheds tears not with the help of feeling but by an effort of the mind. He must be a cold and calm vehicle of the dramatist's thought. Thought guides everything, including the feelings. In his poem about the "Quotidian Theatre" addressed to actors, Brecht thus set out the principles of acting in epic theatre:

...The imitator

Never completely dissolves himself in what he imitates. He never

Quite transforms himself into him whom he imitates. Always

He remains a demonstrator and not an embodiment. The person
being embodied

Has not fused with him – he, the imitator,

Shares neither his feelings,

Nor his views. He knows

But little about him. In his imitation

No third thing appears, consisting, as it were, of him and

Another and yet another – a third with
A single heart and
A single brain.
Keeping all his feelings to himself,
He stands before you imitating and demonstrating to you
a person alien to him.

The epic theatre, Brecht noted, makes the spectator take decisions, confront him with the event, makes him study, and appeals to reason. Paradoxically, the cinema brought back theatre to the theatre by closing the road to naturalistic imitation of reality, the photographic decor and stage behaviour. The theatre cannot rival the cinema in the authenticity of reproduction and so creative search on the stage must turn in a different direction, namely, intellectual analysis of life, philosophical reflection over the state of the world, and profound generalization about human nature.

Music

Music appeared at the lower stages of social development when its role was primarily utilitarian: a tune was suggested by the rhythm of work movements facilitating them and helping to make work more productive; rhythm united people in a single process. Music consolidates and develops the function of sound communication through human speech.

At first music developed in close association with literature. A poetic work was intoned with melody, it was sung. Music formed a similar synthesis with dance.

The art of music creates a special kind of sound that is not to be found in nature and outside music. Where do these sounds come from? Dubos noted that just like a painter imitates the forms and colours of nature so the musician imitates the sounds, intonations, sighs, modulations of the voice, in short all the sounds with the help of which nature expresses feelings and passions. Herbert Spencer also asserts that music originates from passionate, excited speech. The musical sound is of a kind with intonation. The voice was the first musical instrument. The basis of music is rhythm and harmony which blend to produce a melody. The first musical generalization of speech intonation was accomplished in folk tunes which were created and polished over centuries. The intonations of human speech that lie at the basis of the musical image are always emotionally charged. This leaves an imprint on the art of music, which talks to its audience in the "direct language of the soul",

stirs the feelings of joy, sorrow, grief and the whole range of emotions and their shades. The musical image is woven of human feelings.

Music also includes onomatopoeia and representational elements, but neither is its inherent feature. The musical image lacks the visual impact of painting and the concrete sense of the word. It does not convey precise concepts nor does it create visually tangible pictures or recount events. Music not so much portrays the world of objects as reflects human feelings and thoughts. And thought, as Asafiev stressed, becomes intonational in order to be expressible in sound. Music is inherently dynamic. It consists not only of a special kind of sounds but also of the movement of these sounds, their flow in time expressing the whole gamut of human emotions. It is "the poetry of Sound" (L. Stokowski).

Music expresses the essential processes of life through its sound images. The music of Beethoven carries the echoes of fierce battles, grand campaigns and victories, the intonations and rhythms of revolutionary marches. This is true of the finale of his Fifth Symphony. Romain Rolland described this music as an epic of glory, the music of battles and grandiose triumphs.

Music, being the most complex type of art, whose images do not have a pronounced representational function, provided the basis for intuitivist aesthetic conceptions. Rationalism (Leibnitz) defined music as the hidden arithmetical exercise of the mind. Schopenhauer considered music to be a secret metaphysical exercise of the soul about which it cannot philosophize, an immediate image of the blind, unconscious and ubiquitous will. According to Schopenhauer, music has nothing to do with the cognition of the visual world because it is independent of it and could exist even if the world did not exist, which cannot be said of other arts. Spengler, on the contrary, considered music to be the supreme form of human cognition. However, neither the exaggeration nor the denial of music's cognitive potential, neither rationalistic nor intuitivist conceptions can fully reveal its nature. *Emotional experience and the idea imbued with feeling expressed through a special kind of sound based on the intonations of human speech – such is the nature of music.*

The key elements and expressive means of the musical idiom are the melodic-intonation structure, composition, harmony, orchestration, rhythm, timbre and dynamics.

Music is akin to architecture in that both depend heavily on rhythm and have a form of images remote from life, both are far removed from the concrete life material which enters the image in a "resolved" shape, and finally, both have

particular potential for reflecting not individual aspects or incidentals of life, but its core, its spirit.

Choreography

Dance is an echo of music, a melodious and rhythmic sound translated into melodious and rhythmic movement of the human body revealing the characters of people, their feelings and thoughts about the world. The choreographic image arises from musically rhythmical expressive movements sometimes supplemented with pantomime, special costume, and military, domestic and work objects (weapons, kerchiefs, kitchen utensils, etc.)

A person's emotional state is expressed not only in the voice, but also in gesticulation and the movement. Even a person's gait can be brisk, joyful or sad. A person's movements in daily life and at work are always emotionally intoned, expressive and follow a certain rhythm. The dance has for centuries polished and generalized these expressive movements to produce a whole choreographic system, its own artistic language whose medium is the moving human body. The dance is national, for it gives general expression to national character.

Like music, dance was initially a creative and a performative art at the same time (the author was also the performer). As these arts became more complicated, the composer (choreographer) became separated from the performer (musician and dancer).

Noverre, the founder of the ballet theatre, wrote that our inborn love of music leads to love of dance. The two arts are inseparable brothers. The gentle and harmonious intonations of one cause the pleasant and expressive movements of the other and between them they present enticing pictures to the eye and the ear. The harmonious merger of the arts conquers the viewer and makes him experience the most exquisite of delights.

Dance appeared far back in antiquity, in primitive society, as the artistic representation of hunting and work processes. In primitive society the dance brought people together. For example, Australian tribes marked by dance any important social occasion that involved collective action, the gathering of fruits, the beginning of a hunt, initiation of youths and a war march.

In Ancient India a number of styles and schools of dance were evolved featuring different facial expressions and movements. In Ancient Egypt the dance was part of the religious ritual. With the ancient Greeks, too, the dance was part of religious worship (extatic dances to honour Dionysus and flowing and solemn dances to honour Appolo). There were also Pyrrhic (military) and

athletic dances which served the purpose of harmonious developing the youth. In Ancient Rome the dance had state and national significance; the elite also had entertainment (including erotic) dances.

In the Middle Ages the art of choreography was officially persecuted but the popular dance continued to develop. During the Renaissance period dance again became popular. In the 16th century there appeared new forms of dance: pavane and courante (slow) and galard and volte (quick). The French Royal Dance Academy set up in 1661 developed a classic system of choreography which played an important role in the development of the ballet. In the late 17th century ballroom dances – gavotte, polonnaise and minuet – became widespread in Europe. The French Enlightenment (Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot) opposed the aristocracy and absolutism and criticized the court ballet associated with them on account of its decorousness, and the cult of thoughtless entertainment, frivolity and clichés. In the 18th century the dance acquired a more developed dramatic and narrative emotional basis which contributed to the emergence of ballet.

In Russia the first ballet performance "Orpheus and Eurydice" was staged in 1673.

The music of Tchaikovsky, the work of the choreographers Didelot and Petipa, the art of Istomina and Pavlova were milestones in the evolution of the original school of Russian ballet.

Soviet ballet has continued the brilliant traditions of the past in Ulanova, Plisetskaya, Chabukiani and others. At the same time folk dance flourished in folk ensembles (such as Beryozka, Rero, etc.).

Photography

On January 7, 1839 Louis Daguerre gave the first public demonstration before French scientists and artists of the images he had obtained on silver plates.

They were miniature photographs of the Louvre, a tower of Notre Dame, the embankment of the Seine and a corner in an artist's studio. He had discovered a method of writing with light, i.e. reproducing objects by the use of the laws of optics and chemistry. The artist Daguerre and Niepce, the inventor of heliography, claim the credit for originating photography. Immediately there arose the problem of the relationship between photography and art. Photography has become a kind of art with its own distinctive features.

Photography is capable of carrying out the dream of Goethe's Faust for which he had sold his soul to Mephistopheles: "Stand still, the instant, you are

beautiful". Photography records a fact of life in perpetuity.

The specific feature of photography as an art lies in its images having documentary significance, which is the most valuable feature of photography.

Photography offers an artistically expressive and authentic frozen image of an essential instant of reality.

In photography, life is transferred with the minimum of processing from the sphere of reality into the sphere of art. At the same time, with the development of the technique and craftsmanship of photography it became possible for the artist to express his attitude to the object through the choice of angle, the distribution of light and shadows, the conveyance of a kind of "photographic *pleine aire*", i.e. the air and the reflections cast by objects, and through apt timing of the shots. Photography has now tamed colour and is poised for a breakthrough into a three-dimensional, holographic world.

Cinema

Cinema is the child of the 20th century. Its appearance was made possible by the achievements of science and technology, notably in the field of optics, chemistry, electro- and photo-technique, the physiology of eyesight (the discovery of the capacity of the retina to store a visual impression for a tenth of a second), etc. However, the birth of the cinema cannot be attributed solely to technical and scientific advances. Cinema came into being to fill a vital need. Its emergence was stimulated by the social features of modern times, the broad scope of popular movements, the involvement of millions in the conscious making of history, the overall increase in the pace of life, the expansion of mutual dependence between different processes (the rapid shift of action in geographical space; the connection between events in different parts of the globe; the interaction of man with various spheres of reality).

The cinema finds its prerequisites in the achievements of the traditional arts. The modern novel (Balzac, Stendhal, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky) combines observation of the minute details of life with a broad epic coverage of reality, isolates the close-up and the "long shot" and is essentially a "montage" of pieces of narrative. The broad implications of Ibsen's and Chekhov's plays, the improvement of stage technique, notably Stanislavsky's discovery of the link between a person's physical action and inner state – all this determined the expressive means of the cinema. Painting and drawing too contributed to preparing the ground for cinema. Painting discovered different planes of portraying reality, used the close-up, emphasized telling details. It tried to portray visually the movement of the people's masses (Surikov, Repin), the

characteristic movements of different professions (Degas), the interpenetration of light and shadow (Renoir, Monet). Drawing develops the picture story in which events unfold in time (that trend is manifested in the work of Herluf Bidstrup, the Danish cartoonist, but its sources go further back).

There is no hierarchy of the arts. The cinema surpasses theatre, literature and painting in the creation of *moving visual images capable of covering contemporary life in all its aesthetic significance and originality*. The cinema conveys the dynamics of the present time; using time as an expressive means it is capable of representing a rapid succession of events in their inner logic. But cinema does not have some of the important advantages of other arts. Thus, the direct contact between actor and audience is the strong side of the theatre, and the capacity to "make the instant stand still" and make a documentary record of an essential event that can be studied at length is the advantage of photography.

Cinema is by nature a synthetic art: a film includes literature (the script and song lyrics), painting (animated cartoon, sets in ordinary film and, most important, the experience of the visual arts), and theatre (the actors' performance). The introduction of sound and space (three-dimensional cinema), without changing the nature of film, enriched it with the spoken word and music. Music ceased to be the accompaniment and addition to visual impressions and became an element in the creation of a single audio-visual image.

The cinema draws directly on the opportunities made available by technology. The features of the cinema are apt to change with the discovery of new technical and artistic means. At first the cinema was Le Grand Muet (the Great Mute). Then technology (the invention of photo elements) made possible simultaneous recording of sound and sight. True, at first the cinema had some difficulty coming to terms with sound. When the first sound films appeared in 1928 Charlie Chaplin declared that he would not make sound pictures. He wrote an article about talking films entitled "The Suicide of Cinema". *City Lights* and *Modern Times* were shot as silent films. Chaplin feared that sound would open the floodgates to tasteless theatricality and the specific nature of cinema would be lost. However, the crisis of transition to the sound cinema was overcome by making sound an artistic means.

From the Great Mute to sound cinema, from sound to colour, and then the three-dimensional image, stereo sound, the wide screen, and cinerama – these were the turning points at which the cinema expanded its artistic range. Characteristic of the cinema is visual rather than verbal action. That is why

the film script is in many ways closer not to drama but to narrative (story, novel). The script writer, unlike the dramatist, is free of the many restrictions of the stage. Cinema can portray any event or phenomenon, no matter how large or small, no matter how great its size in space and time. In the cinema the whole world is the stage, and action shifts freely in time and space.

The cinema is truly international. Various nations have contributed to its technical and artistic evolution. After the artistic discoveries made by Sergei Eisenstein in *The Battleship 'Potyomkin'* montage has been referred to all over the world as "Russian montage". Griffith, the American film director, claimed the credit for pioneering the close-up.

The artistic arsenal of the cinema is vast and diverse. It includes montage, varying distance between the spectator and the spectacle (the close-up, the medium and the long shots), change of angle of vision, etc. The elementary "unit" of the cinema is the frame. It records the object of the artist's attention. In the frame the emphasis is not on how the artist sees the world but on what he sees. Montage, on the contrary, is concerned with the quality and character of the vision of the object, helping to accent the main features. Montage reveals the inner link between frames and conveys the rhythm of the movement of life and the inner state of the hero.

The cinematic image has a time dimension to it, it has tempo and rhythm determined not only by the actor's behaviour but also by montage which brings out the emotional content of the episode. "Slow" montage is capable of conveying the impression of calm observation and revealing smooth and uninterrupted flow of events. "Rapid" montage conveys a nervous tautness in the observer and turbulent development of events. In the hands of a master artist the camera is able not only to record but creatively interpret pictures of life. One may recall the poignant scene of the death of Boris in *The Cranes Are Flying* directed by Mikhail Kalatozov. The whirling tops of birch-trees on the screen reflect the impressions of a mortally wounded soldier and assert the beauty of life with which he is parting. The movements of the camera and angles of shooting can vary infinitely, which accounts for the rich artistic opportunities of the cinema.

Modern cinema is mastering the highest achievements of the other arts, such as the Stanislavsky system, the method of psychological analysis and intellectualism. It has made photogenic the very human thought and the inner world of man. The cinema is an inseparable part of the treasure-trove of world civilization. The summits of cinema match the summits of world literature,

painting and sculpture. The cinema has an inexhaustible potential for further evolution.

Television

How does one define television? What is it? Cinema at home? Spectacle? A kind of journalism? A new type of art? Is it a new technological gadget or a breakthrough in aesthetics? Television is not only a means of mass video information, but a new type of art capable of conveying aesthetically treated impressions at a distance. Television today has a larger audience than the cinema. There are thousands of transmitting and relay stations in the world. That seems to be changing even the cosmic nature of our planet by making its radio characteristics similar to giant stars. No other religion can bring together such a vast number of unlike-thinking worshippers as television.

As a means of video information television has great social value. Its frontiers are expanding. Already one can transmit TV programmes from the ground, from underground, from under water, from the air and even from outer space. The TV eye can see what the human eye is unable to see. "Better see once than hear a hundred times". This old proverb provides an unexpected comment on the advantages of television over radio and a partial answer to the question why television has acquired its own artistic and expressive means.

What are these means? The TV screen is illuminated from within and so has a somewhat different texture and lighting and composition laws than the cinema screen. Light is the most powerful expressive means on television. Television's expressive potential is greatly enhanced by angle, montage, the movement of camera and close-ups. It characteristically combines smooth, "hidden" montage with abrupt breaks and shifts to another object of attention. Television for all its photographic and documentary nature, its closeness to the object has a great potential for selecting and interpreting reality. At the same time it carries the danger of standardizing men's thinking. "Mass consumption" of the same intellectual products, if their quality is inferior, may cause clichés in public consciousness. In television, the aesthetic aspect and artistic level of programmes is particularly important.

The fact that television is part of the domestic setting makes it akin to applied art. It is an art that has entered our home and has become part of our everyday life.

At the dawn of television Eisenstein predicted a new quality of the actor in this type of art.

An ideal presenter of a television programme is a lively, "unprogrammed" and "unrehearsed" person, a host of the programme who creates a talk in front of the viewers, is able to tactfully involve those present in an informal conversation and draw them out of their shells. To be sure, spontaneity in art is usually achieved by hard work and effort. But no matter how much effort has gone into good poetry it always flows easily and naturally from the poet's soul. The same ought to be true of a TV programme. Everyone who appears on the TV screen involuntarily becomes, not only a person who has a certain occupation in life but a living image, a character in artistic reportage in a new type of art.

Television requires a special kind of talent. A TV personality must combine the qualities of an actor, journalist and director, charm and erudition, facility in communicating with people, instant reaction, resourcefulness, wit, improvisation skill and a civic commitment and passion. So far, unfortunately, not all the professional media men appearing on television meet these standards.

An important aesthetic feature of television is that it shows a "*here-and-now*" event, a direct on-the-spot report and involves the viewer in the stream of history which is happening today and which can be the subject of newsreels only tomorrow and of literature, theatre and art the day after tomorrow. So far live reporting has usually been confined to such occasions as big football games, figure-skating competitions, meetings of cosmonauts, parades, etc. But history is made not only on festive days. It is extremely valuable to "peep" at the natural flow of life through the eyes of a television camera and an intelligent and resourceful commentator capable of vivid improvisation. There are great possibilities in the hidden camera observing the flow of life on a crowded street corner, in a shop, office, factory or port.

In a TV report *screen time is equal to real time*. When television resorts to newsreel format, it must preserve the sense of immediacy, of the viewer being present at the event.

The following account of a successful programme on Central TV pinpointed an important distinguishing feature of television as a genre. It all started when a TV studio received a letter from a Ukrainian woman who was looking for the grave of her son who had died during the Second World War. After much search it was established that the soldier died in the battle for a small Czech town and was buried there. It turned out that the inhabitants of the town remembered the hero, honoured his memory and named one of the Young Pioneer units after him. The head of that unit was a young girl who

has lost her parents during the war. When the soldier's mother learnt about it she adopted her without ever having seen her. Moscow cinema and television reporters asked the mother if she would appear on TV and speak to her adopted daughter. The scene was filmed. Czechoslovak television did the same on its side. Then the films were exchanged and on a fixed day and hour mother and daughter were invited to television studios in Prague and Moscow.

The mother was shown a film about her daughter and the daughter a film about her mother. They were then able to speak to each other, over the telephone. It was an emotional conversation of people who had just seen each other on the screen and had heard each other's voice for the first time. All this was telecast simultaneously by Prague and Moscow television. It was an unusually moving programme for it showed real characters and feelings of people that spilled out under unusual circumstances. The secret of the programme's success was a new peculiarly television method: *the search for a situation in which human characters, feelings and thoughts express themselves naturally*. In television the "unconditional authenticity" of what is being portrayed is crucial.

Television can include the whole world within our field of vision. It may make the viewer think in terms of the whole nation, the whole mankind and reflect over the destinies of the world. It is capable of analysing the state of the world and revealing it in vivid and tangible images. Television must have this philosophical element if it is to produce its own classics, something without which no art can exist.

Television is a powerful information medium which may carry artistic content as well. Television is wonderful for relaying major events in the artistic world. It can also be a great teacher. The subject of television art is the whole world. The adolescent muse is growing up, getting its own voice, its vision of life, its attitude to things and its poetics.

¹ Romain Rolland, *Jean Christoph*, Edition Albin Michel, Paris, 1954, p. 266.

² Georg Wilhelm Hegel, *Ästhetik*, Band II, pp. 226-27.

AESTHETICS: THE MORPHOLOGY OF ART
The Branches of Artistic Creation: The Science of Their System

THE HISTORICAL DYNAMICS OF THE ARTS

Social Demand and the Development of the Arts

The arts form a historically dynamic system. It is necessary not only to identify the features of every element in that system, i.e. every branch of art, but also to trace their historical evolution and their changing interaction bearing in mind the following:

the influence of literature as the verbal basis of artistic culture on the other arts;

the time of the emergence of every branch of art, the intensity of its being, its social functioning and impact at a given historical period;

the historical change of social demand for various arts;

the nature of divergences between the arts (separation from one another, acquisition of unique specific features, irreplaceability, advantages and limitations) and merger (the process of synthesis and diversification of the various arts);

the fact that every historical period produces a dominant art (i.e. one that most fully corresponds to the social and artistic demands of the given period, the most popular and having the broadest audience) and the most representative art (i.e. one that most fully represents the artistic culture of a period to succeeding periods).

The branches of art are also determined by the life material on which they are based and the historical nature of the personality who creates them. Like every kind of activity artistic creation objectifies man's essential powers in their *concrete-historical originality*. The originality is manifested in all the main functions of artistic activity, i.e. the cognition, appraisal, creation and communication with the world, as well as in self-knowledge, self-assessment, self-creation and self-communication (inner communication) of the subject, i.e. the artist's self.

While formal searches, the discovery of new artistic means, and (the eternal desire to probe the unknown are inherent in art, the main spring of artistic evolution lies elsewhere. It is *social demand* and the degree to which a given branch of art is capable of satisfying that demand. The evolution of painting and sculpture provides ready examples. The soaring heights they achieved in the Renaissance period were the result of demand for visual arts.

Primitive peoples knew well the anatomy of animals. In cave drawings the portrayals of animals are amazingly accurate and reveal deep knowledge of the structure of their bodies and habits. To kill an animal it was necessary to know its vulnerable spots and its ways; to dress the killed animal it was necessary to know its structure, and the actual process of dressing was an object lesson in anatomy. His constant hunting activity made the primitive artist a superb animalist. In recording the tribe's hunting experience, the artist helped himself and his fellow tribesmen to gain a more accurate knowledge of the object of its vital interests. The utilitarian aspect, as usual, preceded the aesthetic, and utility gave birth to beauty, while beauty helped to derive more benefits from nature and know more about it.

The antique artist was conversant not only with the anatomy of the animal but also with that of man. The bringing up of a brave and strong warrior involved gymnastics, music and the visual arts which were sensitive to the beauty and strength of the human body. The Olympic Games and the sculptural figures of heroes performed similar social-aesthetic functions. The slave-owning democracy needed a warrior, a defender of Hellas who was able to procure slaves for its economic reproduction and development. The interest of the Greek visual arts in the strength and beauty of the human body had deep concrete-historical roots.

Medieval visual art scrutinized the inner world of man, and tried to penetrate into his spirit. Human flesh was no longer significant in itself. The beauty of the nude body was replaced by the cult of a body draped in heavy materials reaching to the heels. The monk's habit was the most characteristic garment of the Middle Ages. It made man shapeless, robbing the figure of its outlines. Art was still blind to the anatomical differences between the grown-up and the child. In medieval painting Christ the infant was just a small grown-up.

Renaissance revived the cult of the nude body stressing not only its beauty and power, but also its sensual attractiveness. The joy of living, intellectual and sensuous pleasure informed the Renaissance art which celebrated the female body, shown as virtuous by Giorgione, as luxuriant by Rubens, earthly and heavenly by Titian, and spiritual by El Greco.

Renaissance painters became attentive to the anatomical difference of age. They identified and accurately reproduced the proportions of the child, grown-up and old person and discovered the dynamic anatomy of man in movements of various tempos and abruptness at various angles and directions.

Leonardo da Vinci thus summed up the leading role of painting in the arts of

the Renaissance period: "When on King Mathew's birthday a poet presented him with a work praising the day when the King was born for the good of the world, and the painter gave him a portrait of his beloved, the King immediately closed the poet's book, turned to the painting and fixed his gaze on it with great admiration. The poet was very angry and said, 'Oh, king, read on, and you will become aware that it is a subject more profound than the mute painting.' On hearing himself being admonished for contemplating mute objects, the King said, 'Oh, poet, be silent, for you do not know what you are saying: the picture serves a better feeling than your work, which is intended for the blind. Give me something I could see and touch, and not only hear, and do not blame my choice for having put your work under my elbow and holding the painting in my hands and training my eyes on it: my hands themselves wanted to serve a more worthy sense than hearing.' I believe the relationship between the science of the artist and the science of the poet should be the same as that existing between the corresponding senses of which they are objects." These are the words not only of an artist who prefers his own occupation to others, but also of a theorist who is keenly aware of the leading place of painting in the arts of the Renaissance period. The anti-ascetic, anti-scholastic, humanistic thrust of the period, its rejoicing in the splendours of life, its spiritual and sensuous delights could best and most fully be expressed in painting. Geniuses always appear in those areas of social practice where they are most needed. It is not by chance that Renaissance produced such great painters as Leonardo da Vinci, Rubens and Titian. Social demand propelled the visual arts to the summits of the human spirit. The same mechanism could be found to be at work in other branches of art.

The Historical Trend Towards the Divergence of the Arts

The history of the arts is the history of their divergence, their acquisition of specific features. This can be seen in the relationship between painting on the one hand, and drawing and literature on the other.

The underlying basis of painting is the aesthetic sense of colour, the most elementary and popular sense. Painting isolated that sense and made it one of the means of interpreting the world. But that did not happen overnight; for centuries painting and drawing developed as genres of a single visual art. There was no distinction between them, painting being just colour drawing. Drawing preceded painting. Man learnt to record the outlines and plastic forms of objects before he was able to reproduce their colours and shades. The

mastering of colour was a protracted process and not all colours were mastered at once. The ancient Greeks did not know the difference between blue and green, for example.

The Renaissance artists discovered spatial perspective, which was a gain both for painting and drawing. Man became aware not only of the shape and colour of objects but also of their relative position in space. In ancient art the objects were arranged not in physical but in mental space. To accent the importance of an object its size was increased in the first attempt to create compositional accents in painting which later developed into full-fledged principles of composition.

The syncretism of the ancient visual arts brought painting closer not only to drawing but also to literature, as witnessed by the narrative character of ancient painting. Ancient Chinese and Egyptian paintings gave an account of events that unfolded into a chain of scenes and figures, portraying a sequence of episodes. The tradition of narrative held longest in icon painting.

In the course of its subsequent evolution painting becomes an art in its own right that cannot be replaced by any other art. The Renaissance period marked an important stage in that process. And yet the thought of painters did not then become fully distinct from that of poets. Painting and poetry as late as the 17th and the first half of the 18th centuries can hardly be distinguished in their theoretical premises.

The theorists of the 17th and 18th centuries tended to identify poetry and painting and did not record the differences between them.

The distinctions between poetry and visual art were first profoundly analysed by Lessing. These distinctions were the result not only of the development of theoretical thought but also of the artistic process itself, one of whose trends is enhancing specific distinctions between individual arts.

The late 19th century witnessed the growing divergence of painting and drawing. Painting is closely associated with colour: it records the diverse colours of the world as its aesthetic richness and it reveals the essence of objects and determines their social significance and value in colour and through colour. Painting and drawing became fully distinct types of art at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Impressionist painting is fundamentally different from drawings. It conveys nothing outside colour and treats all linear considerations as secondary. Not the drawing, not the narrative but the colour relationships of the objects portrayed are the main vehicles of the aesthetic meaning of painted works. In this way painting separated itself from drawing and from literature.

The Historical Trend Towards Interaction and Synthesis of the Arts

The history of art, along with the growing divergence and individualization of the branches of art, is witness to a reverse process, viz., the growing interaction and synthesis of the arts which acquire an independent and individual nature. And the process of their synthesis may take a growing number of forms. The study of the historically changeable typology is essential to the building of a dialectical rather than a merely classificatory morphology of art.

Syncretism was a particular kind of synthesis characteristic of ancient art. In that form of synthesis different arts form an organic whole and have not yet branched off from the single primeval historical tree of culture which included, in each of its phenomena, not only the embryo of various branches of artistic activity but also of scientific, philosophical, religious and moral consciousness. The second form of synthesis in the arts is *subordination* in which one art dominates another. Such relationships began to take shape in ancient architecture which interacted with monumental sculpture, painting and mosaic. Architecture dominates in that synthesis.

Sometimes even literature enters into a relationship of subordination to architecture in the shape of an inscription (poetic extract, literary quotation, etc.). There is at least one case of the subordination of music to architecture: a Burmese pagoda hung with bells which create a silvery cloud of the lightest and gentlest tinkling around it.

Another form of synthesis in the arts is a *collage* of pieces of different arts, as in the medieval mysteries and, in the 20th century, in the *Laterna Magica* shows in Czechoslovakia.

The fourth form of synthesis in the arts is *symbiosis*, in which various arts interact on an equal basis merging to produce something new. Thus opera, which became popular in the 18th-19th centuries, is a symbiosis of drama and music. The 19th and 20th centuries saw the birth of the variety show in which literature, music, ballet, theatre, circus, etc. join together on an equal basis.

Variety is a mass entertainment addressed to a "mixed" audience. The aesthetic impact it produces has a wholeness about it that makes it possible to talk about the birth of a new art from the equal coexistence of several arts.

The fifth form of synthesis in the arts is a *dissolving* of one art in another without either being directly represented in the final result, or only in an indirect form. Such is the relationship between literature and choreography in ballet. The literary basis of ballet (the libretto, the plot) is undoubtedly

important, but in the final result – the ballet performance – the main element of literature, the word, is not represented. That form of synthesis did not develop until the 18th century.

In the sixth type of synthesis, *concentration*, one art draws on other arts while remaining itself and preserving its artistic nature. For example, photography integrates the experience of painting and drawing without being dissolved in them, the cinema draws on the artistic means of painting, drawing, theatre, literature, etc. This kind of synthesis is to be found in such a synthetically rich type of art as the theatre which interacts with music, literature, painting, architecture, choreography and later with photography, cinema, etc. In spite of all this, the theatre retains its basic character.

In the seventh type of synthesis one art becomes the *vehicle* for another. This is particularly well illustrated by television, and also in cinema and photography which relate the artistic results of the theatre, variety, ballet and other arts with varying degrees of completeness and effect.

The last two types of synthesis are especially characteristic of modern times and appear mainly in the "technical" arts of the 20th century, i.e. cinema, television and photography.

Literature: The Verbal Basis of Artistic Culture and the Leading Art

The theoretical implication of the much used phrase "literature and the arts" is not always clearly understood. Literature is an art along with the theatre, sculpture or choreography. And yet it would not occur to anyone to speak of, say, "theatre and the arts". Apparently literature is "the first among equals" and even, in a way, something more than just art if it is so strangely singled out in the overall structure of artistic culture. How do literature and the arts relate to each other? What in that relationship is historically stable and substantive and what is transient? Are literature and art a kind of opposition or are they unequal parts of a single whole? What do they have in common and what differentiates them from each other?

All these questions are the first to be asked and the last to be answered when it comes to the problem of the branches of art and the structure of artistic culture as a whole.

The clue to the universal and all-pervading character of literature lies in the universal, all-embracing and pervasive character of the "natural" language used by literature, its social complexity and its infinite and hourly expansion and enrichment, its daily link with the life experience and social practice of

the people. Its power and at the same time its limitations prevent literature from filling all the spheres of culture, for all its universality. Leo Tolstoy noted that it is impossible to describe a person, it is only possible to describe how he struck one. In other words, literature cannot rival painting in visual representation, it has other goals and potential.

The word is the expressive means and the thought form of literature, the sign system of its imagery. The word is inherently geared to the image. The historical process of the development of the natural language has saturated it with images and has prepared it for associative cognition of the world in images. In the beginning was the word – this is what the Bible says about the creation of the universe. The universe of art has certainly been created in this way: in the beginning was the word.

The writer extracts his construction material – words – not from the larders of nature but from the depths of the national spirit. Unlike clay, paints, film stock and other media used in sculpture, painting, cinema, etc. the construction material of literature (the word) is not only socially pre-processed and "humanized" (the latter is partly true of clay and paints, etc.) but is socially loaded. The word carries social content even before it is put in among other words, within an art context and has been invested with unique meaning in the literary work. Only the musical sound is akin to the word in its artistic function, but the musical sound itself has historically appeared from the word, i.e. from the intonational system of speech.

In a certain sense then, music too owes its origins to literature. Literature is no less important for other arts. The aesthetic ideals and mode of life, which go a long way to determine types of architecture, depend on literature's verbal form. Mythological and literary plots and motifs lie at the basis of the plots, composition and artistic conception of many works of painting, sculpture, theatre, ballet, opera, programme music, etc.

Artistic culture, then, has a verbal basis: literature exerts the *determining (system-forming) influence* on all arts, and the artistic images created in other arts are perceived in its context. The perception of all the arts presupposes a level of literary culture, the ability to "superimpose", compare the literary basis against the art text offered by a particular branch of art. Some scholars, while recognizing that literature played the dominant role among the arts in the past, believe that the situation has now changed. The development of cinema and television, they maintain, makes visual non-verbal information quantitatively prevalent and qualitatively determining. One of the proponents of this theory, Marshall McLuhan, divides the history of culture into three

periods: at the first stage oral verbal information is predominant, at the second stage, verbal written information, and at the third stage, visual information. It is true that the role of visual information has today increased many times. But literature still preserves its determining significance as the verbal basis of all artistic culture, including visual culture.

Literature's subject tends to expand. It now includes within its purview the world of nature, social life and the state of the individual's soul. Literature handles this material through different genres either as dramatic reproduction of reality, or narrative or lyrical confession.

The Predominant Branch of Art and Its Historical Changeability

Every historical period has a predominant branch of art which most adequately meets its social and aesthetic needs. It changes from one historical period to another due to the changing needs and the social subject which exerts an influence on progress in art (the allocation of resources and concentration of mental effort on particular branches and areas of artistic culture). When an art comes within the focus of public attention that creates advantages for its development and is evidence of increased demand for it. In the antique world the aesthetic taste of the *demos* expressing the artistic needs of the free citizens was the main force in artistic development that determined which arts would be prevalent. Theatrical performances and other mass artistic cultural activities provided the widest scope for spontaneous expression of that taste. The artistic demand of antique democracy oriented art towards popular appeal and stimulated those types of art which addressed themselves to all the citizens of the *polls*. That is why the most developed arts at the time were sculpture, theatre and architecture.

In the Middle Ages the church became the subject determining the evolution of art. The leaning towards the exalted and the ideal, belonging to heaven rather than to earth, was most dramatically manifested in cathedral architecture and in icon painting. The striving towards the sky visually translated itself into the shapes of Gothic cathedrals. Architecture became the art which had priority claim on material and technical resources and its development was encouraged in every way. The prevalence of architecture in the system of medieval artistic culture was theoretically validated and affirmed by the aesthetics of the time. Thus, St. Augustine stressed the supremacy of architecture over painting because the latter "tied a person to things and removed him from the Creator". The architecture of cathedrals

formed a synthesis with painting (icons) and music (church singing, masses and hymns).

The Renaissance period gave birth to the institution of patrons of the arts, a way of the engagement of art by the aristocracy. Visual arts were the most frequently patronized ones. The Renaissance demand for challenging the ascetic attitudes of the Middle Ages was most fully met by visual, sensuously pleasing images of painting and sculpture.

In the period of classicism, the monarchist state became the directing force in art. The centre of its attention shifted to theatre and the main form of its influence on artistic culture development is the prescriptive aesthetics of classicism. Its requirements are cast in artistic norms that reflect in a specific way the socio-political principles and demands of the court.

The social influences behind the art of the enlightenment, sentimentalism and romanticism became more complex and mediate. In the final analysis its subject was the bourgeoisie, but the engagement of art in the sphere of its interests assumed sophisticated forms. Often philosophical and aesthetic influence on an artist went hand in hand with the latter's economic interest.

Literature and theatre came to the focus of social attention because they were capable of expressing views on the world in the most direct way. Realistic art developed on a broad democratic social basis. Its motive force was the third estate, and later sometimes the peasantry with all its strong and weak sides and contradictions. Art criticism became the main form by which society influenced realist art. Literature became the dominant art.

The art of socialist realism expressed the interests of the proletariat and later, the interests of socialist society. The Communist Party in the USSR became the guiding force in the development of culture. It exerts its directing influence on art in various forms: the education of artistic intelligentsia, notably young artists, moral and material encouragement of socially valuable trends, art criticism. The focus of interest is on the arts with the biggest audience: literature, cinema and more recently television.

So, at different periods different arts were at the centre of social interest. The social subject that engaged artistic culture has changed from one period to another and so have the forms of regulation. Accordingly, the art which most fully met the socio-artistic demands of the period became dominant.

Representative Arts and Their Historical Evolution

Artistic culture is transmitted both "horizontally" (within a given society and each concrete period) and "vertically", i.e. to succeeding periods and generations of men. The type of art most adequately performing the role of historical transmission is called *representative*. The representativeness of an art depends on its ability to express most fully the essence of contemporary artistic culture and transmit it to the following stages of social development. The world changes, and the new "historical-cultural quality" is more adequately expressed by another type of artistic culture and a more representative branch of art moves into the foreground. The representative function of a branch of art ensures the continuity of the cultural tradition and helps a new historical period to find its cultural identity. The arts do not only reflect reality and human practice but artistically represent the concrete historical essence of the individual. A work of art demonstrates to man his human qualities and, to the extent that this demonstration pinpoints the most characteristic features of a given socio-cultural situation, one can say that this or that art is representative in the above sense.

Every new historical period in artistic culture tries to identify a representative branch of the art of a past period with the dominant art. Sometimes the two happen to coincide (for example antique sculpture). But it is not always the case that an art which most fully represents its historical period in the eyes of the succeeding periods (representative) is the branch of art that is most popular and vigorous in its time and in its society (dominant art). The theatre of classicism was the dominant art of the classicist period. It was at the focus of Boileau's aesthetics, it was the main artistic preoccupation of the court, and it best met the artistic demands of the public. But one gets the most complete idea about the classicist period not from theatre but from literature because a stage production does not last and is impossible to preserve adequately over a long historical period.

The dominant and most popular art of today is television. But television has yet to create its classics by which future generations could judge about the spirit and the essence of the present historical period. The representative function is being much more effectively fulfilled by the cinema and literature. A representative art must have classical specimens because they alone are relevant to future periods and convey "vertically" (i.e. through history) the spirit of a time and the essence of a culture. The universal human significance

of artistic work – which is inherent in its nature – is realized through the representative quality of art.

Technological Advances and Prospects for the Interaction of the Arts

The development of technology and the mass media is directly influenced by aesthetic demand. Television, for example, has arisen due to the need to record the facts and events of contemporary life in an immediate way and interpret them ideologically and artistically. Of the many demands catered to by television, it is these that have stimulated its birth. However, in spite of improved television pictures (greater resolution and size of frame and improvements in colour television), the modern state of the small screen does not yet quite match the demands which produced it in the first place. TV pictures do not yet adequately reflect reality because they are not three-dimensional. The aesthetic demands which have brought forth television have continued to stimulate its development, the birth of colour (a new step towards making the TV frame more realistic) and the current efforts to develop three-dimensional colour television. The technical principles of three-D television have already been found. They are holography in combination with stereo sound. It now remains to put these ideas into practice.

What will artistic culture gain with three-dimensional television?

In the first place, there is a large area of art which can only be adequately shown on three-dimensional television (sculpture, architecture and theatre).

Painting, which builds its perspective on a flat canvas, suffers from the imperfections of colour on TV and not from lack of three dimensions. But sculpture, architecture and theatre lose a great deal from the flatness of TV pictures. 3D television will provide these arts with a more accurate vehicle and a means of conservation in time. It would have been far easier to restore the Old Square and the Royal Castle in Warsaw or the unique Petrodvoretz destroyed during the last war if three-dimensional television pictures of them had been available. It is a fascinating prospect, too, for every man to be able to go on a three-dimensional television tour through the streets of Moscow, Paris or Rome.

Such exposure to the national art treasures of other peoples would open great opportunities for the aesthetic perception and assimilation of world culture. Stereo television will also open new vistas for music and theatre because television will then be able to reproduce them in a situation close to that in which they are traditionally perceived in the concert hall or theatre. There will

remain only one (technically not insuperable) obstacle for a fully adequate perception on TV, and that is the absence of feedback from the audience to the performer. The holographic image on TV will enhance the "presence" effect of any programme. And then not only artistic but also topical and news programmes would have an aesthetic impact.

The bridging of the gap between reality and the way it is shown on television is not without its dangers, however. The positive sides (the growing "presence" effect, the involvement of the viewer, the documentary and convincing character of programmes and the deepening of their impact) go hand in hand with the negative sides (the approximation of television pictures to the status of unconditional reality eliminates awareness of the convention that underlies every art).

Presented with television pictures that are indistinguishable from reality the viewer may get the illusion of being present and being involved in all the events of the world while remaining absolutely passive. There is a danger of the viewer becoming too contemplative and civically inactive, realizing all his potential in "playing out" a life-like situation brought to him by television. And one cannot rule out that some viewers may be tempted to react directly, not to life but to its picture on the TV. Only true art can provoke in the viewer a moral and aesthetic experience and philosophical and political thoughts that lead him to be active in real situations and not only with regard to the events on the screen. All this suggests that the growing naturalness of TV pictures must go along with emphasis on the conventions inherent in every art. Verbal means may play an important role in that. The spoken word would be able to restore and provide the necessary measure of convention in a perfectly life-like picture. That is why the word will probably play an important new role in future television. This is a further argument to prove the fallacy of McLuhan's predictions about the future "visual" civilization. The growing role of visual images in man's life due to television will be increasingly offset by the verbal element. In other words, along with the appearance of holographic television there will emerge a new synthesis of television and literature whose leading role with regard to other arts will be further increased in the future. The birth of sound-recording marked a breakthrough in the history of music whose consequences have yet to be fully understood. For the first time in the history of musical culture sound recording made it possible to multiply and store a musical work.

That has introduced a new mediating link between the composer and the listener. In addition to the earlier intermediate link (the performer) there is

another one represented by the disc and the magnetic tape which can record and play back a musical performance.

The character of a performance in the recording studio changes. In addition to the existence of the new intermediate link the performer has to take into account such factors as the absence of direct exposure to the audience and the "averaging" of the character of a performance aimed at the anonymous listener. Discs, tapes and microphone have created new trends in musical performance and accompaniment: the wish to "shout one's way through" to the "invisible" audience by simplifying artistic form and raising the sound volume; pop art trends; "voiceless" singing; and simplification of the lyrics in pop songs to the point of vulgarity.

These processes are bound to affect the fate of musical classics in the age of piped sound. In the first place classical music has gained a larger audience and lost its aura of elitism. Records and other forms of sound recording have made the performance of musical classics more democratic, opening up wide opportunities for their popularization.

Stereo culture has become part of the modern artistic culture invading the sphere of leisure, which is all the more important in view of the growing amount of leisure available. Sound recording as a mass medium has an analogue in such audio-visual media as the cinema and television. The recording, copying and storage of music have brought new elements to the interaction and synthesis of music with other arts (cinema, theatre and television). Recorded sound culture has great untapped potential in the non-musical field: the recording of readings, plays, literary compositions, etc. Some progress in that direction can already be reported. Recorded sound is becoming part of everyday life: morning exercises on radio, the reading of fairy tales for children, recorded foreign language courses, etc.

Further improvements and expansion of the technical range of sound recording (better quality, wider frequencies, long-playing records, sets and albums of records, etc.) enhance its artistic impact. There are recordings of operas, ballets, large symphonic works, concerts, etc. Advances in sound recording have led to stereo sound. There are increasing possibilities for colour-music.

Sound recording plays an important role in terms of handing down artistic culture "vertically": it enables great musical performers to be recorded for the future generations. A new technical and cultural challenge and perspective is the "restoration" of the stereo sound from the mono recordings of Chaliapine, Caruso and other great musicians made before the stereo age.

Recorded sound also plays an important "horizontal" cultural function by bringing the best musical performances to the remotest corners of the world. Recorded sound offers broad new opportunities for aesthetic education.

AESTHETICS: THE THEORY OF ARTISTIC COMMUNICATION AND THE SEMIOTICS AND CULTUROLOGY OF ART

The Science of the Transmission Art Products, and the Sign Systems and Cultural Meaning of Artistic Activity

ART AS GENERALIZATION

Structure and Types of Artistic Generalization

Artistic communication¹ establishes intellectual and creative link between author and recipient; it transmits to the latter artistic information containing a certain attitude to the world, artistic conception and stable value orientations. The mediating link in that transmission is the *art work*, and in the performing arts (music and theatre) also the *performer*. The transmission of artistic information is usually a two-way communication for it proceeds not only from the author via the work of art to the recipient but also in the reverse direction (feedback). The recipient does not only consume the artistic product but also takes part in its creation. The ontological status, the existence of the art work and its social functioning are determined not only by the author's text but also by the competence of the recipient, his ability to cover his part of the way in the act of communication. The historical, group and individual experience of the recipient interacts with the art text to such a degree as to make it a dialogue between the text and the recipient, and not one-way communication. The recipient only gets from the text as much as his cultural background enables him to read into that text.

In the process of artistic communication the sender (artist) enters into three types of relations: author – reality, author – recipient and author – the creative process. Added to these relations in the process of communication are the relations: recipient – art work, recipient – author and recipient – reality. Each of the essential stages and sides of artistic communication is studied by a separate discipline:

1. Art communication begins with the creative act, with the creation of an artistic text and its subsequent influence on the audience. The study of artistic communication should therefore be preceded by a study of the mental mechanisms that make possible the creative process of materializing the conception into a work of art. That problem is the subject of the psychology of creative work.
2. The psychological mechanism is also involved in the final stage of artistic communication, the assimilation of the art product. It is the subject of the

psychology of art perception. The latter combines with the psychology of creative work to form the psychology of art.

3. The creative process is crowned with the creation of an artistic text which is then perceived by the recipient. The artist's thought in that process is encoded into a sign system which constitutes the text of the art work. When the recipient perceives the text he decodes the sign system. All these aspects of the process are the subject of the semiotics of art.

4. The creation of the artistic text and its subsequent perception by the recipient represents the transmission of artistic information, which is the subject of the information theory of art.

5. An essential element in art communication is the perception of art. The latter is more than passive appropriation of the art product, it is the process whereby the ontological status of the artistic text is raised to that of an art work. In other words, it is in the process of perceiving art that art lives as a social phenomenon and becomes a fact of social life. In the process the artistic text and the author's life experience it contains interact with the historical, group and personal experience of the recipient. The artistic text is "enriched" and is capable of communicating with the recipient and acquiring new qualities in the process of this interaction. These processes are the subject of the theory of artistic perception which also concerns itself with aesthetic mechanisms of art perception (identification, synaesthesia, artistic suggestion, aesthetic pleasure, etc.).

6. Artistic communication is effected through understanding the meaning of the art work, and its reading by the recipient in the context of history, social reality, artistic culture and public opinion.

That aspect of artistic communication presupposes that the reader (listener, spectator) understands the historical reality portrayed by the author; the reality contemporary to the recipient; the author's personality; what he wanted to say and what he has actually said; the meaning of the art text; its ambiguities; the spirit of the culture reproduced in the text, and the artistic conception of the text. The theory of understanding is the subject of hermeneutics.

7. Artistic communication includes the perception not only of the meaning of an art work but also of its value. The latter reveals itself as the value of the work for mankind as well as the author's facility (skill) in handling the technical tools and norms of art and the ease with which the conception is materialised in the work. All these aspects are studied by axiology (the theory of values) and the value analysis of the work based on it.

8. The process of artistic communication as interaction between the sender (artist) and the addressee (recipient) through the art work is the subject of the theory of communication.

9. If the recipient is the mass and the art work is brought to it through some powerful modern means of communication ensuring its wide geographical and historical diffusion (i.e. in space and time) the process becomes the object of the theory of mass communications.

There are fundamental differences between the ways an art work is perceived through reading (literature), viewing (theatre), and through a television and cinema screening or radio adaptation, i.e. transmission with the help of mass communications media. In such cases the author's artistic thought is not only expressed by other artistic means and in another language, but is *semantically different*.

Every type of art engenders its own *type of artistic perception* whose channels exert a specific impact on the individual that cannot be exerted by other types of artistic perception. Thus, in spite of film, television and radio adaptations of literary works their reading cannot be replaced by other artistic impressions.

The strong sides of reading as a type of artistic perception stem from the active involvement of the reader's experience in perception, the age-old tradition, the effectiveness of verbal imagery and expressive means addressed to the reader's imagination, the link with the national character of culture and the fundamental importance of literature (thanks to the word) for the whole culture and the reverse enriching influence of verbal art on the natural language.

Reading is based on the plastic and intellectual potential of literature, on the historical experience of translation and exposure to a foreign-language culture. Reading has on its side the vast cultural treasury of world values created by Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky and the capacity of literature to be in a flexible and direct link with philosophy, morality and other forms of social consciousness. Finally, reading demands a considerable intellectual effort and accordingly possesses a high hedonistic value.

Literature in the true sense exerts not a "mosaic" or manipulatory effect, but the effect of shaping *a person's world view*.

The information theory of aesthetics (Bense, Frank, Moles) divides information into two types: semantic and aesthetic. Semantic (for example, scientific) information emphasises the transmission of meaning and factual experience while aesthetic information has to do with evaluation and the

experience of relations. Aesthetic information is more susceptible to interference and intolerant of foreign elements than semantic information. Thus, while a scientific text can, without much loss, be rendered in different words and even adequately expressed in the language of mathematics, an artistic text is destroyed in such rendering or translation into other means. Other differences of aesthetic information from semantic information include the use of a non-standard code and "redundancy" (for example, the artistic message in theatre is conveyed by several systems duplicating one another), and inherent originality.

According to Bense and his followers, aesthetic information exists on the basis of "sign without meaning". In other words, the signs of the art idiom convey meaning but are deprived of objective meaning, that is, carry useless information unrelated to any practical goal.

Bense's proposition paraphrases in terms of the aesthetic information theory the old Kantian idea that art is a play of fertile imagination devoid of external purpose. One cannot go along with that idea because artistic information carries not only sense but also objective meaning, i.e. artistic value as significance for mankind.

Information aesthetics formulates the conditions for the existence of an art work in the following terms. The minimum conditions that determine its physical existence are: materiality (being embodied in a material form), communicativeness (the function of transmitting information), being man-made (the result of human activity). The maximum conditions that determine the aesthetic reality of an art work are: sign character (an object stands in place of some other), order (subordination to message, organised structure), indefiniteness (lending itself to different interpretations of the message), value (global breadth of the objective meaning, relatedness to mankind as a whole). Considering artistic work only from the angle of the information theory highlights only the communicative function of art leaving out its other important functions. At the same time, the information theory approach, if correctly applied, reveals an important scientific task of aesthetics, i.e. the creation of a *theory of artistic communication*.

Artistic Text: The Central Link in Artistic Communication

The first treatment of art as a process of communication is found in Plato's dialogue *Ion* in which he describes the creation and functioning of art. The muse inspires the artist who in turn inspires others down the line, like a

magnet imparting its power to iron rings. An art text carries conceptually loaded and value-oriented information. The communication act in art is transmission of the message and artistic value from the sender (author) to the addressee (recipient). Artistic information and value and the very nature of the communication act depend not only on the author's contribution to the act and what is recorded in the artistic text but also on the cultural background and active attitude of the reader (listener, spectator). An art work is an area of "tension" between the sender of the information and its recipient.

The life of an art work, its social ontology, begins from the moment of its social functioning in which the perception, "consumption" of art is the first stage. The latter happens when there is a dialogue between the public and the art work. This dialogue is two-way: not only the work influences the public, but the latter, by its opinion and understanding, influences the social functioning and realization of the art work as a fact of artistic culture. In the process of perception, the flexible structure of an art work turns and rearranges itself as it were to suit the recipients' attitude. The audience is influenced by an explicitly stated idea or conception inherent in the system of images and by the style of the whole work.

In some arts (applied arts) the artist thinks in terms of style, as it were, style carrying the main flow of information. Style is a reception-oriented and externally expressed inner necessity of the artistic world. In terms of communication, *style* is a programme of mutual understanding between author and audience fixed in the artistic text. The type of perception, the character of interpretation and the essence of communication depend on the qualities of the text.

The latter can be of three types: scientific (scientific paper, report or lecture), "practical", business (letter, document, reportage, diary) and artistic. Scientific reading does not require interpretation of the text: it lends itself to only one interpretation owing to the monosemantic nature of the text and the definite volume of thought fixed in scientific terms. The interpretation of a "practical" text depends on the communication situation.

The interpretation of an artistic text involves *revealing its analogy with reality "through similarity"*. Herein lies one of the differences between an artistic and a scientific text. An artistic text may have many readings. However, the polysemy of an artistic text is not infinite, not absolute, it has its limits. The readings of an artistic text by different people tend to vary within a certain range around an "axis" of meaning. Beyond the extreme points of allowable variation a reading stops being valid. Although the perception of an artistic

text is variant, it contains an invariant of interpretations and offers a stable programme for perception. For all its dependence the personality of the recipient, his mood and experience of life and art, that programme has some firm and stable parameters stemming from the objective content of the artistic text, the underlying artistic conception and values.

In the process of artistic communication there appears a field of the recipient's relations, a combination of objective and subjective factors determining the perception of the communication.

Perception depends on the perception situation of the period, group perception attitudes, the general cultural background, knowledge, emotions and experiences of the recipient, the character of the communication and the circumstances under which it is received (time and place).

The process of artistic communication is realized when the recipient's field of relations coincides with that of the sender.

As distinct from a business text, an artistic communication is based on a special model of communicative relations. An artistic text is 1) complete, not to be tampered with, and at the same time semantically variable, which forms a certain field of communication; 2) the object of an artistic text does not exist outside that text; 3) the field of relations providing the basis for the recipient's communication with the imagined text does not exist before the perception of the text begins. The recipient in perceiving the artistic text is involved in *co-creation which produces meaning*. The recipient's attitude to the text is *interpretation*.

ART AS LANGUAGE.

THE SEMIOTICS OF AESTHETIC AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITY

The Sign and Its Role in Artistic Culture

Semiotics is the general theory of signs and sign systems. Parallel to the process of the birth of semiotics (its founders are Charles Pierce and Charles Morris, American philosophers) within the bosom of logic and linguistics there was a growing awareness of the language aspects of art which prepared the ground for a fruitful use of ideas of semiotics in the study of artistic culture. In the Soviet Union, the study of art from the angle of semiotics was pioneered by Eisenstein whose new cinema idiom called for theoretical investigations. He conducted them in collaboration with psychologists.

The semiotics of art and aesthetic activity is an important department of modern aesthetics. Let us consider the main propositions of semiotics with

reference to the language of art, notably the following strings of concepts: "signal – indication-sign – statement"; "sign – image – artistic statement – artistic text – art work – meta-sign".

Signal is an object exerting an influence on the senses and carrying a certain information.

Indication is a signal that carries unintentional, unprocessed information unloaded with consciously determined information.

A cloud for example is an indication (but not a sign!) of an approaching rain. While reflecting cause-and-effect relations, it does not carry encoded information.

Sign is a signal that carries meaning, consciously loaded information; it is an object related to another object which it denotes. The sign in cultural behaviour plays the same role as the tool in a working operation. The sign, like the working tool, has the mediatory function, but unlike the working tool, which is an instrument by which man works on the object, the sign merely replaces the object without altering it. The sign is created for an activity whose prime task is to master the essence and change man himself.

The sign is a sensuously perceived object referring those who perceive it to another object. The sign does not replace but *stands for* the signified (the object denoted). Eisenstein notes that in situations of stress people sometimes suffer a relapse into pre-logical forms of thinking that do not distinguish between the sign and the referent.

"When a girl who has been betrayed tears the 'wicked deceiver's' photograph in anger, she instantly carries out a purely magic operation of destroying the person by destroying his image (based on primitive identification of the image and the object)." The "primitive" form of expressing one's inner state described by Eisenstein is most suitable for art, and the artist would not miss the chance to use it to portray the state of the hero. This led Eisenstein to the assertion that form in art is impossible without a tendency "to regress", while content is impossible without a tendency to "progress". An artistically endowed person must have both these elements in his psyche, with the progressive component predominating. Such is the balance within the creative artist. The regressive component is sensuous thinking without which an artist would not be able to create images. At the same time a person incapable of purposively controlling that field falls at the mercy of the sensuous elements and is doomed to madness rather than creative work. This problem is dealt with in the aesthetics of surrealism which attaches absolute value to the regressive component (the sensuous element of artistic thought) and denies

the role of the progressive component (control by reason). This is the theoretical background to the surrealist idea of the "switching off of reason" and automatic writing. In a certain sense it can be said that artistic creation is madness that has a sense of proportion, "madness with method in it".

The sign in art reveals the concrete sensuous basis of thought. In ancient times the name was regarded as the sacred part of the living creature. Calling someone by name, the primitive man revived the essence. The ancient relationship between name and essence provides the basis for the relationship between sign and meaning in artistic work. The sign, like thought in general, is connected with action.

Delving in the depths of archaic consciousness, Eisenstein reveals the link between word and gesture and the primordial gesture meaning of terms. The underlying meaning of the most abstract words can be traced to simple human movements. It is not by chance that Stanislavsky recommends going down to a physical action in order to reproduce an expressive image on the stage. From action, stage behaviour Stanislavsky leads the actor to thoughts and feelings and experiences, which makes it possible to evoke and control the spectator's empathy, which in turn would have a cathartic influence on his soul and change the structure of his consciousness. The actions of the character create tangible signs in stage art from which images, artistic thought and conceptions are made. In a play, objects (parts of the set) also become signs of artistic meanings: they are involved in the action and they must "work". Chekhov liked to say that if a rifle hangs on the wall in the first act it must fire at the end of the play. It is this involvement of stage objects as signs that makes them vehicles of meanings in the theatre.

The functioning of a sign creates a *sign situation*. The reading of a sign presupposes revealing and understanding the object (the referential meaning of the sign) and the meaning (the semantic meaning of the sign). In a sign situation both meanings manifest themselves. The absence of one component destroys the sign situation. Thus, if a road sign has faded letters it keeps its referential meaning (it refers to a particular stretch of the road) but it makes no sense. On the other hand, if road signs are piled together, each of them has sense but no referential meaning (it is not related to a real object, a particular stretch of the road).

There are different *types* of signs. One of the early classifications of signs was suggested by Pierce who based it on *the way in which meaning and sense are expressed*. He singled out three types of signs: iconic, symbolic and index. *Iconic* signs resemble the objects denoted giving an idea of the outline of the

object, a concrete sensuous image.

Symbols are related to the object by association. They are artificially constructed signs which carry full-scale, sometimes conceptually loaded information, presenting a whole system of concepts in a generalized way. That category usually includes heraldic symbols (coats of arms), trademarks, signs on coins, printing signs, postage stamps, advertising, poster and publishing signs, etc.

Representing a high degree of generalization and conceptual expression, the symbol sign plays an important role in the birth and evolution of artistic culture.

The *index* sign is naturally and physically linked to the object and presupposes the presence of the object denoted. Thus, in that system of classification, lightning is an index sign of thunder. It would be accurate to say that in this case it is not a sign but an indication, an extra-linguistic sign (in the classification adopted in this book).

The latter has no direct bearing on the semiotics of art.

In their sensory impact signs of artistic culture are divided into *audio* (addressed to hearing), *visual* (addressed to sight) and *audiovisual* signs. The fact that these types of signs provided the basis for the sign system of artistic culture has the following explanation: first, sight and hearing are capable of carrying information over long distances unlike taste, smell or touch which require either direct contact or physical nearness to the object; second, hearing and later (with the appearance of writing) eyesight became historically linked with verbal communication which socially polished these senses and created a tradition of loading them with social and cultural information.

The typology of signs in artistic culture also distinguishes them in terms of *their basis*: the *character* and *purpose* of their functioning.

The most essential type is the *sign of belongingness to culture* which shows that a given phenomenon is not a natural but a cultural one. One may recall the famous Stone Garden in Japan where natural stones are arranged in a special way. The visitor gets a sign that this is a cultural and not a natural phenomenon. He observes the garden from a terrace which has steps leading down to the garden. But the last step is missing as if to warn the visitor that he cannot walk in the garden, it is a product of culture and not nature and it can only be looked at.

The reflection of reality in art presupposes a measure of convention.

Violation of convention leads to naturalism when the cultural meaning of art

disappears. The practical implication of this for art is that the closer the original signs of art to the natural ones, the greater the degree of convention and contrast to nature it must convey through other signs or their combinations or by assigning a greater role to the subjective element. The problem is particularly relevant to artistic photography. The technique ensures that the image is very similar to reality and the artist must take particular care to emphasize the convention of his art and the subjective aspect of the pictures.

The *sign of receptory anticipation* warns the reader, spectator or listener about the character (type, kind or genre) of the work he is about to perceive; that sign helps a person to tune in to a certain reception wave (tragedy or comedy, symphony or light ditty) and to prepare himself mentally for the perception of the work. The receptory anticipation signs also include the indication of genre in published literary works, an overture to an opera, introductory musical phrase to a *chastushka* (light topical ditty), the announcement of the type and theme of an exhibition. Signs are the primary elements of an artistic text. They form themselves into an *artistic statement*.

The Language of Art. Art Work: The Meta-Sign of Artistic Culture

The language of art, like any other language system, needs a particular *code* (in the case in hand, the artistic code), i.e. a dynamic system of rules for using signs.

An approach that considers only the inner logic of the system of signs is found wanting in the study of artistic culture. It is also necessary to take into account the real meanings which these signs carry.

In art, the system of meanings and senses of sounds takes the form of the *artistic image* which in terms of semiotics is an *artistic statement*. This type of statement carries artistic, universally human, non-utilitarian information. While being of the nature of a sign in its origin and being expressed by signs the artistic image is not itself a sign. The *artistic text* is a combination of images, a system of artistic statements that form an *artistic message*.

The sign is the minimal unit of an artistic text. The difference between the signs and the utterance is that in the process of communication the signs must be *recognized* and the utterance *understood*. The system of statements (utterances) constitutes an artistic text whose semantic content – the artistic conception – must be *interpreted* and *evaluated*.

An artistic text appears by transition from the level of signs to the level of

object-semantic content. The attitude to the world and its values contained in the art work is realized in disappearing signs, in a sign system that dissolves itself. An artistic text refers us not to language but to the interpenetrating materiality and spirituality in the inner world of the work.

The structure of an artistic text is formed of artistic images and the latter are made up of signs. However, every transition to a higher level (from signs to artistic statement, i.e. to image, from a system of images to artistic text) involves a qualitative leap, a resolution of the preceding level and the emergence and addition of a new quality of sense and new meanings of artistic thought.

The artistic text (a closed system) acquires the status of an art work (open system) in the process of social being, in the process of cultural communication. The art work, being a minimal unit, an element of artistic culture, is a sign of artistic culture, or rather, its meta-sign, i.e. a sign carrying a higher semantic content and broader object meaning than ordinary signs of which the image is built.

Artistic culture as an entity is made up of meta-signs, i.e. art works.

The dialectics of the artistic process is extremely complex. It combines sign and non-sign elements: signs, through a qualitative leap, shape into an artistic statement, i.e. an artistic image (a non-sign entity); the images make up an artistic text (another leap), whose inclusion in social functioning makes it an art work, a meta-sign of artistic culture. *A meta-sign (art work) has sense (artistic conception) and object meaning (value for mankind).*

Semiotics interprets the language-communicative aspects of the artistic process. Style in terms of semiotics is the phenomenon of a "a diversity of languages within a language", as recognition of basic equivalence of various styles, as the possibility, within certain limits, of translating the sense of a statement from one micro-language (style) into another. The translatability of style (similar to translation from one language into another with the preservation of the original sense) is readily observed in the performing arts where the same work can be performed in different styles. Within the same language (macro-system) there exist stylistic varieties (micro-languages), and in that sense artistic culture presents us with stylistic diversity just like multilingualism. The semiotic approach to style in art detects and interprets an author's "hand", the "pronunciation" of the signs of the artistic culture.

ART AS A PHENOMENON OF CULTURE

The Multi-Lingual Nature of Artistic Culture

All types of artistic and aesthetic activity produce their own ramified, synonym-rich languages which alone make possible the existence of different branches of art.

The word is the verbal sign. Accordingly one can interpret semiotically many important problems in the relationship between the different arts, and the leading role of literature in their system.

The word accompanies or comments on all the non-verbal arts. The constructive quality of the word is polysemy.

Theatre is a communication unfolding in the space of the stage and over time.

The key element of the stage language is the *spoken word*.

But the sign system of the theatre language includes both verbal and non-verbal signs. Non-verbal signs include *index signs* (e.g., thunder in the performance of Shakespeare's *King Lear*²), *iconic signs* (stage sets) and *symbolic signs* (e.g., the picture of a seagull on the curtain at the Moscow Art Theatre).

Theatre is informational polyphony and organized dynamics of stage signs.

The spectator sometimes gets as many as six to seven messages simultaneously coming from the sets, costumes, lighting, position of the actors on the stage, their gestures, mime and speech.

A stage play is a complex, multi-code system of signs. The multi-code nature of the play makes it possible for theatrical art to address itself at once to the connoisseur spectator who is capable of grasping the full meaning of the performance because he has mastered all its codes, and the general public which understands the stage action knowing only several of the codes. The duplication and mutual complement of channels of information and codes makes a stage play a particularly reliable and effective means of artistic communication.

Music generalizes and processes the intonations of human speech into its own language which has a hierarchy of levels: *individual sounds*, *sound combinations* and *chords*. The sound scale of European music consists of seven main tones. Simultaneous combination of three or more tones yields a chord. *Volume*, *tempo* and *rhythm* also play a meaningful sign role in music. These signs combine into the musical phrase which is an artistic utterance, a musical image, and the system of images forms a musical text.

Nature has no musical sounds, but merely noises showing varying degrees of

organization. The musical sound is a phenomenon of culture. While colour in painting can be described in terms of comparison with objects (yellow is like lemon), the musical sound can only be described through a metaphor ("the long sobs of autumnal violins"). "Concrete music" deprives noises of their natural qualities turning them into pseudo-sounds. Semiotic analysis shows that in changing the nature of the signs of musical language, "concrete music" destroys music.

In the *cinema* the minimal artistic utterance is the *montage phrase* which in the silent cinema was often accompanied by a written utterance and in the sound cinema is indicated by a *frame-episode*.

The sign system of the *visual arts* has evolved over the years and continues to evolve. Among the semantic elements of the system of painting are the *processed flat surface*, *regular edges of the picture* and the *frame* (these factors were absent in cliff drawings).

In modern times there has appeared a kind of painting that does not portray depth of space and is unframed. Its analogue in sculpture is a statue without a pedestal, suspended or standing on the ground.

There is sign meaning *in parts of the picture surface* and the position of the object of portrayal in that surface. In a portrait by Munch the introspective subject is placed to one side in an empty space. That produces an artistically meaningful effect enhanced by the concentrated pose and other elements which add up to an expression of sadness and alienation. The artist J. Gris pointed out that a yellow spot carries different visual "weight" in the upper and lower fields of the picture. The sign meaning of "up" and "down" in painting is connected with the vertical position of the human body, the direction of the force of gravity, and the experience of observing the earth and the sky. "Right" and "left" as parts of the picture space carry meaning owing to the traditions of culture, notably the historical type of writing (direction) and owing to the asymmetry between the right and left hands.

The language of painting includes among its signs *the format of the picture* and *the size of this or that figure*. Larger-than-life figures in painting or sculpture convey the grandeur of the individual portrayed, while a miniature format confers intimacy, elegance and preciousness on the object. In ancient art the main protagonist was often larger than other figures and even larger than the trees and the mountains. In the Renaissance period new signs were introduced to indicate the social significance of a figure: *the dress*, *signs of distinction*, *pose*, *place in the picture* and *position relative to other figures*.

Meaning is carried also by such elements of the painting as *sign-carrying*

matter, i.e. artificial marks made in pencil, pen, or brush (lines and spots). The impressionists introduced new signs capable of conveying light, the air texture, the interplay of colours. The tree in their paintings is a blob of colour. The shape and colour of these blobs on the canvas bear little resemblance to the shape and colour of parts of a real tree. The sign of a tree put on a canvas is identified as a tree thanks to the context, but individual dashes and strokes of the brush do not remind one of leaves and branches.

As soon as a flexible, ramified and synonymically rich sign system emerges speech in that language acquires artistic qualities (cinema and television as arts arose in that way), and the signs making up the text acquire artistic expressiveness (this underlies the art of calligraphy and the artistic value of old manuscripts and hieroglyphic documents which have no artistic content in themselves). Not only art proper but aesthetic activity in general develops a specific language which subsequently influences artistic culture.

For example, carnival as a form of aesthetic activity with its own language penetrates art culture conferring some of its features on it. The carnival has produced a whole language of symbolic concrete-sensuous forms. This language is used to "pronounce" whole "utterances" (for example, large and complex mass events) and some signs enter a sign system (for example, certain gestures during the carnival). This language has articulated a carnivalesque perception of the world which informs it. It cannot be adequately translated into a spoken, let alone a scientific language. But a relatively accurate translation of "carnival speech" can be made into the speech of literature which is akin to it in its concrete-sensuous character.

Mechanisms of the Functioning of Artistic Culture

Culture is an activity itself and a product of human activity, the non-genetic, social memory of mankind. Culture is the "man-made" nature and the process of its production. Culture is a means of organizing a social entity, a means of man's reproducing himself as a spiritual being and revealing his inherent potential. Artistic culture is the most stable humanistic area of culture, for all its variability.

Artistic culture has a complex structure and includes two systems: 1) a system of institutions ensuring the production, personnel training, management, distribution, diffusion and consumption of artistic culture; 2) the system of art and its works. Each of these systems falls into subsystems.

The existence and social functioning of artistic culture involves *three essential*

processes (and in that respect an art work is similar to other types of production in society): 1) the production of artistic values; 2) the distribution of artistic values; 3) the consumption of artistic values. These three processes involve both systems of artistic culture, i.e. the institutions and art proper. Art as a cultural phenomenon is divided into branches each having, as shown above, its specific language and its sign system. The multilingual nature of artistic culture presupposes that an artistic person is a cultural polyglot. Indeed, the simplest model of a creative act in culture is reverse translation. In the translation of a message, say, from a verbal language into the visual language the original message is encoded into another sign system. If one makes a translation back into the initial sign system the original statement would in the process undergo such a change that the resulting text will be a new product of a creative act. Any cultural artistic activity thus presupposes at least two language systems.

The multiplicity of the language systems in artistic culture ensures the effectiveness of one of the key functions of art, the aesthetic function: art awakens in man a creator of material and spiritual values in accordance with the laws of beauty. By ensuring the creativity of the human spirit artistic culture acts as a guarantor, as it were, of the extended self-reproduction of culture. Thus, the process which consists of production – distribution – consumption of artistic values is a process developing in an upward trend. The artistically created phenomena of artistic culture obey many social factors and laws in their production, social functioning, distribution and consumption. Only by revealing these laws is it possible to understand and predict the phenomena of artistic culture.

In other words any prognostication of artistic culture is only possible if there is a theory which accurately reflects the laws of the existence of art.

The sphere of art culture is the sphere of *artistic values*, which represent *the highest man-made forms* of aesthetic values. Aesthetic values are always involved in culture although they may preserve their natural autonomy (beauty in nature). In that case the inclusion of aesthetic values in culture takes the form of a certain value being attached to a natural phenomenon in real life. In other words, the beauty of a natural object is its quality born by society, it has a cultural origin (being the result of human activity) although the object is natural and owes neither its origin nor its existence to man. Aesthetic values may be part of culture (design products). If one were to summarily describe the difference between artistic values and aesthetic values in nature one can say that the former express the objective aesthetic richness

of the world, the aesthetic attitude of man to reality and are an embodiment of that attitude in a skillfully fashioned cultural phenomenon. This description of artistic values has been given in terms of the philosophical-axiological approach which is aimed at revealing not the differences but the common nature of all aesthetic values (the objective significance for mankind and the sphere of freedom)³. A look at the problem from the point of view of culturology and semiotics with the use of their conceptual apparatus would reveal some important specific differences between art values and aesthetic values in nature.

As distinct from the aesthetic value of a natural phenomenon an artistic value is *a value arising in a language communication situation, transmitted by language signs*.

Let us consider a concrete example. The rainbow is a sign of the change of weather from rain to sunshine. That natural phenomenon is very beautiful (aesthetically valuable). The beauty of a rainbow is an index sign (in accordance with the above-given classification of signs) or an indication of an objective aesthetic quality of the phenomenon. That sign is involved in a reception situation and not in a language or communication situation, i.e. there is only the object (rainbow), its qualities (beauty), and the sensuous form of expression (the combination of seven colours in the rainbow) which plays the role of an index sign or quality. The quality is the beauty of the rainbow. But here there is no language communication situation, e.g. there is no sender of the information.

In contrast, art values are conveyed only in *iconic* and *symbolic* signs (but not in index signs). These signs are included in a communication (transmission of the artistic message from author to recipient) and language situation: there is a cultural code for reading the signs; they are related to artistic sense (and not a quality) and are a specific form of communication, they have been consciously created in order to pass information from man to man.

An artistic value is an international (purposive, directed) language sign. Unlike the aesthetic value of a natural phenomenon, an artistic value is *a means of communication, a means of conveying value orientations from person to person*. To understand an artistic value it is important to treat a work of art as a meta-sign (an indivisible element) of artistic culture.

All the above qualities of an artistic value apply to a man-made aesthetic value (the product of design). The difference between them is merely that the aesthetic value of a design product is expressed through a system of signs which carry not only a value (object) *meaning*, but also indicate a

practical *function* of the given aesthetic product. The function of an artistic value is so broad and universal that it merges with value meaning. To the extent that the practical significance of a design product historically declines and the product becomes outdated, its aesthetic value rises to the level of artistic value. For example, with the advent of the water pipe the direct (utilitarian) value of ceramic vessels (to help carry and store water) disappears and they acquire the universal human significance of a finely conceived and wrought form, i.e. their aesthetic value rises to the level of artistic value. It is not by chance that in our day ancient Greek vases and other ceramic vessels are kept in art museums. They were made as objects of practical necessity which had aesthetic value. But their evolution in the cultural context led to their acquiring the value of a work of art. Such is the mechanism of the movement of man-made aesthetic values, such is the historical dialectics of their entering the sphere of artistic culture.

¹ Some kinds of art (e.g., didactic and manipulatory forms) have only a communicative function. But art in the high sense is always artistic generalization.

² Strictly speaking an index sign (thunder, etc.) in art acquires the function of a symbol sign, for it brings the viewer information not about a storm (the spectator is sitting in the theatre and no storm will break out over his head), but about the tragic situation of the hero. In art, then, only symbol and iconic signs are possible.

³ These problems are considered in detail in the section "Aesthetics: the Axiology of Universal Human Values".

AESTHETICS: THE THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF ART CRITICISM
**The Science of the Problems Posed by and the Instruments
Used in the Analysis of Art**

AESTHETICS: THE THEORY OF CRITICISM

Art - Criticism - Society

The creative process in art includes several links: reality – artist – art work – recipient (reader, spectator, listener) – reality. The artist interprets reality; the results of that interpretation are fixed in an art work which is perceived by the public, the audience, on whom it exerts a certain intellectual and aesthetic impact; under that influence the public in turn influences reality in a certain socially active way. The chain of interaction between elements in the art process begins and ends with reality. *Criticism helps to organize that process and influences all its links and the character of interaction between them.* Each avenue of influence is matched by an aspect of criticism and constitutes one of its functions, one of its qualities.

The critic influences the artist's perception of the world (reality-artist relationship) by drawing his attention to certain sides of life and certain themes. In the discharge of that function, the critic tends to raise acute socio-political and philosophical problems.

The critic influences the artist by influencing his artistic personality, shaping his self-control and generally adjusting his artistic activity in social terms. The social aspects of the artists's personality are within the critic's sphere.

There is always something wounding the author's pride in criticism, and yet without criticism an artist cannot really grow. The artist needs self-control which is invariably based on criticism.

Art criticism influences the creation of an art work and so includes some problems that relate to the psychology of art work and craftsmanship. Critical analysis of the work of other artists and one's own previous work influences the author in creating new works and provides important impulses and orientation.

Art criticism interacts with the art work by grasping its meaning and creating a body of public opinion around it. It would be wrong of course to think that art creates semifabricated goods which the critic makes into an object of aesthetic consumption. But it is a powerful catalyst of public understanding and assimilation of the work's message. Criticism begins and ends with love of art.

An unbridgeable gap may form in the art process if critics fail to offer a system of usable criteria and do not put the most important works of contemporary art in their correct historical setting.

Criticism creates a "magnetic field" of public opinion, the environment in which the art work exists as a physically tangible real phenomenon and as a social-spiritual phenomenon. One important function of criticism is to form public opinion around an art work, which helps towards social realization of the work and gives insights into the dialectics of the material and the ideal in the existence of the work.

Art criticism influences the "art work – recipient" relationship.

It helps towards attentive reading and interpretation of the art work which is presented to the consciousness of the audience in the light of its interpretations. The task of the critic is similar to that of a director: to reveal and interpret the message of an art text. The artist's inspiration may be lost on the contemporaries if the critic does not do his job and fails to prepare the audience for understanding new departures in art.

The critic influences the artist's audience by shaping its tastes and social attitudes. Value judgements on art works are an important aspect of art criticism. Sociological studies help to reveal the mechanisms, nature and character of the influence of criticism on the public.

Aesthetic influence on the public and the awakening of its creative spirit is the prerogative of art. Critics have long tried to influence the reader aesthetically not only through the medium of art (for example Belinsky's close rendering and copious quotations from Pushkin's poetry) but through its specifically critical methods (the emotionalism and expressiveness of style and logical elegance in Belinsky's articles). The latter fact brings criticism close to art. It is important to introduce the reader into the researcher's laboratory, to reveal to him not only the result of critical analysis of an art work but also the process of analysis, the searches of the critic's mind. "Theatricalization" of critical thought (working in front of the public) tends to increase the individual element in the critic's work.

Art criticism stimulates and guides the social involvement of the recipient of art. The critic can, by his interpretation of an art work and social conclusions, influence the mind and social activity of the recipient. Dostoyevsky noted that quality of criticism and insisted that every critic must be a publicist, that he should hold firm beliefs and that he should be able to put them into practice. Criticism introduces the art work into the arena of social life, puts it in the context of the social struggles. That is why the publicistic and civic element is

so important in criticism.

The critic influences reality by presenting its analysis as given in the art work and by analysing and assessing reality himself. Thus criticism is one of the vehicles of social study. The critic juxtaposes the art work and reality, which is one important way of influencing reality. The study of life, and not only of art, is part of the critic's professional luggage. It equips him for analyzing the truthfulness of a work of art.

So far we have concerned ourselves with the "horizontal" layer of the artistic process, but one must also bear in mind its historical "vertical" layer. *The critic influences the character and direction of the influence of artistic tradition on all elements in the creative art process* (reality – artist – art work – the public). The critic helps both the artist and his audience to pick his bearings with regard to modern art, fashion, classical heritage and the entire artistic culture.

To sum up, then, the critic interacts with the public, with the artist, with art and with reality.

Criticism: Is It Literature or Science?

Recent years have produced statements in aesthetic theory which unreservedly identify criticism with literature and deny the scientific and logical elements it contains. From that point of view the scientific approach ("rationalism") is not good for the critic, for it marks a departure from the national tradition in Russia, a concession to West European notions and to the formalists of the 1920s.

In reality criticism has *a double nature*: in some of its functions and methods it is literature and in others it is a science. Identification of criticism with literature and denial of its scientific ("rational") element is sure to raise a few eyebrows.

How can one claim that the scientific element in criticism is an un-Russian tradition if Pushkin said that criticism is a science, if Belinsky described criticism as moving aesthetics and Plekhanov made it an object of scientific and sociological analysis.

What is the relationship between criticism and literary scholarship if criticism is only literature?

Every kind of thinking has its instrument, or method. What is the method of "non-rational" criticism? Intuitivism? Irrationalism?

If criticism is literature it should be using an artistic and not a scientific approach as its instrument.

One wonders if the advocates of non-scientific criticism ever tried to look at

the problem from a general aesthetic point of view and go beyond the "criticism – literature" antinomy. What does one do about the "criticism – theatre" and "criticism – cinema" relationships, etc.? In such a view criticism of choreography will have to be considered as part of choreography and criticism of painting as part of visual arts. But that is absurd. Is criticism of painting literature?

No one knows of such a department of literature.

Nor can criticism be considered as a sphere of pure science. Art criticism is part of the artistic process, it grows out of that process propelled by its own demands and the social aspects of the consumption of art. Art criticism is a borderline area: it is the self-criticism of art, it is a correlate in the self-regulating system of the interaction between art and society. There is no such phenomenon in the sphere of scientific knowledge. To be sure, scientific manuscripts and books are reviewed orally and in print: specialized journals often carry critical analyses and comments on scientific products. But all this useful and necessary activity does not form a special area, such as art criticism. There is no such thing as "science criticism".

Scientific reviews undoubtedly have something in common with art criticism: both evaluate the results of creative work, both orient the readers towards the achievements of the creative process, they are like pilots in the sea of books. But in science these reviews are ancillary in character and as a rule do not become part of the scientific creative process. This stems from two circumstances. First, scientific achievements are initially addressed to specialists and it is only after being put into practice that they are within reach of the broad public. Second, scientific results can be tested experimentally and checked in the process of application. The results of the artistic interpretation of the world today are, as a rule, aimed directly at a mass audience, and most important, they cannot be experimentally checked. As soon as art was put within the range of the broad public the need for a special sphere intermediate between science and art became more acutely felt. In a sense, the artistic taste of the critic is an instrument of experimentation by which it is possible to test and evaluate the art work.

In philosophy and in the specialized sciences criticism is not singled out as a distinct sphere of activity. The development of thought in the form of polemic inevitably involves the presentation of the case for a certain world view. The critical form of philosophical thinking is but a genre of philosophical study that does not form a special branch of activity as does art criticism with regard to art. Philosophical and scientific criticism does not go beyond philosophy

and science and uses their language and their frame of reference. They have not created a meta-language, a meta-system or a meta-position with regard to science. *By contrast, art criticism is a meta-position with regard to art. Art criticism realizes itself "on the borderline" between arts and aesthetics and translates artistic speech into a different semiotic system.* In that sense art criticism is a phenomenon without parallel in the cultural field. It is dual by its very nature: its mode of expressing thought and its involvement in the artistic process make it akin to literature while its mode of thought, its reliance on methodology and the existence of its own conceptual framework make it similar to science.

The Experience of Rhetoric and Criticism as Moving Aesthetics

A look at the historical circumstances in which criticism was born will shed some light on the present-day relations between criticism and related spheres of intellectual activity.

Literary-critical thought was born within the poetic text which gradually acquired the reflective capacity and came to include (beginning with Homer and then in the early lyrical poetry and tragedy) value judgements on the plot, on details, on authenticity and on the artistic merits of art works. The first theoretical and aesthetic propositions drawing on the experience of art were formulated as a counter to the judgements on art contained in ancient Greek poetry. In other words, criticism originated as a result of science and art, philosophy and literature moving to meet each other.

From the 4th century B.C. there existed rhetorical schools which shaped the norms of oratorical art. The democracy of the city-state demanded such an art and sometimes demagogic skill, and rhetoric was the answer to these social needs. Rhetoric had a complex and changeable relationship with philosophy and at the same time was based on the preceding literary and art experience. Gradually literary criticism isolated itself from rhetoric into a special field.

The fact that literary criticism arose from rhetoric is essential for understanding its nature, functions and method. The return to the experience of rhetoric, or rather, the inclusion of its thought matter in the arsenal of the methodology of modern literary (and art) criticism has its roots in the history of its origin.

Whereas in the early days poetry and philosophy were rival influences on the shaping of art criticism, later on these rival influences became aesthetics and rhetoric. In that sense it can be said that criticism in its origin is moving

aesthetics and rhetoric addressed to the analysis not of oral but of written "stylistically marked" artistic speech.

So criticism was born through the interaction of poetry, aesthetics and rhetoric by introducing concrete interpretation judgements in their procedure. The birth of criticism contains some mechanisms which directly or indirectly reveal its essential features and shed light on its present relations with adjacent spheres of intellectual activity.

The history of the origins of criticism reveals its inner link with aesthetics (in the theoretical sphere), rhetoric (which in that process played the role of methodology) and poetry proper (which needed artistic criteria and so reflected and created principles and procedures of self-evaluation).

Knowing the history of the origin of criticism one can understand its modern structure and the field of its interactions: 1) with the theoretical studies of literature and art (aesthetics, theory of literature, art studies, poetics); 2) with disciplines related to the methodology of interpretation (rhetoric, hermeneutics); 3) with disciplines that help in text analysis (structuralism); 4) with disciplines concerned with the development of principles and procedures of evaluation (axiology); 5) with types of art (theatre, music, cinema, etc.) each of which is capable of being not only an object but also an instrument of investigation. One speaks here of a new trend in the development of critical thought, namely the use of the experience of various arts and spheres of art studies. Thus, Bakhtin used the categories of musicology (polyphony) in the analysis of Dostoyevsky's poetics. Eisenstein applied the notions of film theory (montage, close-up, frame) to the study of Pushkin's poetry. Later the term "montage" has been used in the analysis of Shostakovich's music. The use of the experience of different branches of art provides the critic with new methods and a new set of categorial tools.

"Criticism is moving aesthetics," wrote Belinsky. A metaphor can never compete with a scientific definition in rigour and lack of ambiguity, but it has its advantages too: emotional conviction, vividness and instant pinpointing of a relationship between phenomena. Belinsky's aphorism can be interpreted in the following way.

Aesthetics, in generalizing the artistic experience of mankind, produces a set of theoretical premises, laws and categories which evolve and change in the course of time. The propositions of aesthetics provide *the theoretical foundation* for the critical analysis of an artistic text. If a critic gives up aesthetics, it catches up with him in the shape of naive, retrograde and compilatory judgements about art. By running away from knowledge one can

only arrive at ignorance. And the judgements of an ignoramus about art, for all his intuition, taste and skill in expressing his impressions of art, hardly advance the science of art or art itself.

Criticism is moving aesthetics in the sense that a critical analysis is only fruitful when the process involves the apparatus of aesthetic categories and the study of a text relies on the artistic experience of mankind as expressed in aesthetics.

Imaginative thought interacts with the personal experience of the reader, spectator and listener. The image is not monosemantic, but it cannot be interpreted in an arbitrary way. There are limits in interpretation and reading. An image provides a set programme of reflections over a certain range of life material. The critic can draw some conclusions from this: he must have a wide range of exposure to real life and aesthetics; one cannot expect all critics to arrive at identical judgements, but with all the divergences their judgements must remain within the programme assigned by the art work.

The object of critical analysis is a particular art work and art as a whole. Art cannot be seen as a mere sum of art works. The critic must determine the value status of every work. Aesthetics is very important for picking one's bearings in the expanse of world artistic culture. Pushkin points out that criticism proceeds from perfect knowledge of the rules guiding the artist or writer in their work, from profound study of specimens and prolonged observation of contemporary phenomena.

The theorist systematizes knowledge, derives the accumulated mass of facts from a small number of basic premises. A hypothesis confirmed by facts becomes knowledge of a higher order. Science has a "backlog of knowledge", i.e. facts that have yet to be explained theoretically. These modern ideas about the structure of knowledge explain the relationship between aesthetics and criticism. The latter creates the "backlog of knowledge" for aesthetics and confronts it with questions whose solution advances the theory. The results of a critic's first observations are hypothetical and partial, but a serious critic seeks to reveal the laws of artistic work, to arrive at general conclusions. That is particularly true of literary and art scholarship which deal with a relatively stable process at a certain historical distance. Aesthetics is called upon to systematize the knowledge accumulated by critics and literary (art) scholars, to test, reject or raise hypothetical knowledge to the level of laws and categories.

Theory is not an instrument of critical analysis. Coming between the student and his object are not only theoretical judgements about a given sphere of life

but also the methodology that flows from them. The methodology provides the instruments of analysis. In other words, for a critical reading of a work it is not enough to press into service aesthetics and its concepts and categories, it is necessary to equip oneself with the principles, methods and procedures which have been derived from the known laws of art and form *the method of critical analysis*.

The critic's position is usually a superstructure over some cognitive, aesthetic or other theory. In its evaluations, criticism proceeds from the aesthetic aspects of the theory of values (*axiology*). And since criticism involves not only cognitive but also interpretation operations, its other aspect is connected with *hermeneutics*.

Criticism and Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is the theory of interpretation, of understanding meanings. Like gnoseology (the theory of cognition) and axiology (the theory of values), hermeneutics constitutes an inseparable part of a full-scale philosophical system. Hermeneutics is a sphere of intellectual activity through which criticism must pass in order to become aware of its tasks.

Hermeneutics is a heterogeneous phenomenon. Over the ages, not only the character but also the object and sphere and goals of that discipline have changed. Ancient culture contained, in embryo, all the elements of hermeneutics, including its art criticism element as manifested, for example, in the allegoric interpretations of Homer.

The history of hermeneutics has revealed two trends in interpretation going back to antiquity: the historical and symbolic allegorical interpretation rooted in the system of concepts given in the text and in the conceptual framework of the interpreter himself. However, the antique world did not formulate a complete set of principles of interpretation. Hermeneutics enjoyed a development in the Middle Ages due to the need to interpret Biblical texts. In the Renaissance period, textual-historical interpretation comes to the fore, its aim being to clarify the meanings of words and reproduce the historical context of the thought. The Enlightenment conceptions of interpretation (Chladenius, Meier) were built on a foundation of historical principles, proceeding from the premise that reproduction of the historical context of a thought helps to close the gap between – the author and the recipient (spectator, listener, reader) and is the main task of interpretation. The interpreter was a kind of cultural medium, a translator and intermediary

between different cultures and periods. The Enlighteners saw history as a discrete series of changes and their methodology was aimed at preserving the historical originality of an artistic text. The Enlightenment view is that understanding an artistic text means bringing about an agreement between author and recipient. In reproducing the conception of the author, the recipient need not necessarily identify himself with the author's point of view. Sometimes the recipient understands more than the author meant to say, and that is normal for the process of interpretation, because the interpreter-recipient's point of view is historically conditioned and carries an element of subjectivity.

The hermeneutics of the Enlighteners posits ontological stability of the object of interpretation as a condition for understanding.

The next stage in the history of hermeneutics was the theory of interpretation advanced in the early 19th century by Georg Ast, a German philosopher. His theory proceeds from the premise that the unity of human history consists in the unity of the spirit. The notion of the spirit is the key one in understanding the meaning of a text and resolving ambiguities. So, an interpreter of an art work must at the same time be a philosopher and an aesthetician, for he has to grasp the essence of the spirit. While Chladenius measured the clarity of interpretation by the degree to which the objects of the external world are seen behind the text, for Ast understanding is spiritual vision, the mastering of the spiritual wealth, i.e. the emphasis is on spiritual activity. For Ast, and for the German philosopher Schleiermacher after him, the object of interpretation is the author's subjective activity and understanding the author and his attitude to the text, and interpretation is achieved on the basis of spiritual universality, and not through applied thought processes, as the Enlighteners believed. These principles are not wholly acceptable for modern art criticism. The interpretation of a work must be directed to understanding not only the system of the author's ideas but also the concrete historical reality behind it. Schleiermacher distinguishes two aspects in the hermeneutic act: understanding speech as a fact of language and understanding speech as a fact of thought. Speech cannot be understood as a fact of language before its spiritual meaning is grasped. There are however different types of interpretation. The language aspect of interpretation is the object of grammatical interpretation. Understanding as internalizing a thought is the object of psychological interpretation. Only the unity of grammatical and psychological interpretation ensures complete understanding.

Recent years have seen a growing interest in hermeneutics in connection with

the methodological searches of the critics.

Previously, hermeneutics specialized in the methods of understanding and was a set of methods and procedures. Now it makes its subject the thought procedures from the point of view of their spiritual nature.

The interpretation of a work is a necessary element in its reading.

Hermeneutics singles out *three stages* in the interpretation of a text:

1) *understanding* (grasping the meaning of the text); 2) *explication* (expressing the understood meanings in the language of description);

3) *application* (enrichment of the individual's social experience, change in his behaviour, the introduction of what has been understood, "internalized" and expressed into practice).

Criticism presupposes both analysis of the text and its interpretation which ensures a combination of the rational and intuitive elements in its understanding. The rational analysis approaches the art work as an entity hidden within the work, impermeable for direct perception and covered up by a material form which can only be penetrated by analytical, dissecting procedures. For interpretation the work is transparent and its wholeness derives not from its material form but from the hidden, infinite and mobile but in transient meaning.

Ricoeur (France) and Gadamer (West Germany) consider the recipient's own consciousness to be the only instrument of interpretation and believe that there can be no method in grasping the meaning of a work. Such an approach leaves the critic methodologically unarmed.

The methods of hermeneutics are still evolving but already one can name the most important operations with the help of which an art text is interpreted.

They are: 1) The critic ("I") understands a text ("something other than I") *through a "third"* (e.g. through comparing it with cultural tradition and reality). 2) Empathy, penetration into the inner logic of the artistic text. 3)

Mental grasping of the art text in the form of *identification* (the recipient compares the artistic images with his personality and his aesthetic experience). The types of identification are: *association*, comparing oneself with the hero of the work as a protagonist in the action taking place in an imaginary world; *admiration*, comparing oneself with an infinitely superior or inferior character embodying an ideal or an opposite of the ideal; *sympathy*, comparing oneself with an ordinary character commensurable with the recipient; *catharsis*, a compassionate comparison of oneself with a tragic hero; *ironic* a critical attitude towards the anti-hero. 4) The mental horizons of the recipient expand to broaden the context (reality, culture, personal

experience) in which the work is perceived.

These and other mental operations yield an "increment" of meaning by creative addition of the personal aesthetic experience of the critic.

But interpretation is not arbitrary and proceeds in accordance with a programme contained in the text of the work.

One of the moot points in interpretation is the problem of the hermeneutic circle. How to grasp the universal if the interpreter at any given moment deals only with the particular? Hermeneutics answers that the very nature of understanding breaks the circle. It is broken by the spiritual attitude which is mindful of the whole at every stage of the interpretation. The nature of spiritual wholeness in a work is such that the general posits and contains every individual element, and every individual element of the work contains something of the universal. By understanding the general the interpreter understands the particulars, and vice versa.

Today hermeneutics is an instrument of criticism because the theory of understanding is methodologically important for it. Criticism however has to come to grips with the task of evaluation as well as interpretation.

The rational nucleus in the experience of hermeneutics is highly relevant to modern art criticism. That philosophical theory of interpretation, first, puts to the foreground the problem of what should be seen behind the art work (the author's personality, the contemporary issues, the reality of the historical period which has produced the work, or the cultural tradition); second, it provides methodological instruments of interpretation; third, it stimulates efforts to reveal the concrete historical content of culture and an integrated, conceptual-philosophical, non-empirical approach to the understanding of an art work.

The "Objective" and the "Subjective" in Critical Analysis

The relationship between the objective and the subjective in critical analysis and interpretation of the art work is a problem that is central to the methodology of critical analysis. There are two opposite and equally erroneous tendencies in the practice, theory and methodology of art criticism, literary scholarship and art studies: one is the absolutization of the objective element and the other, the absolutization of the subjective element.

The absolutization of the objective element proceeds from the following line of reasoning. The artistic text presents the interpreter with a clear and definitive programme for the understanding of artistic meaning. In that

approach, critical analysis must reveal the objective artistic meaning which does not depend on anyone, has been created by the author and is fixed once and for all in the text (i.e. objectivized in the text). The content is thought of as something surrounded by a waterproof shell against any influences and hence as something invariable and objectively given. The Absolutization of the objective element of critical analysis, exaggeration of the invariability of the objective meaning of a work produces an illusion that it is possible to study an art work in rigorous mathematical terms. Such an approach leaves out of sight the humanitarian character of the art critic's judgement and the role of the interpreter's personality. Those who absolutize the objectivity of criticism ignore its historically determined character and the historical changeability of its judgements. The so-called "precise" methods of critical analysis (the watertight formulas of structuralism, microanalysis, the semiotic approach, the statistical approach, etc.) imply absolutization of the objective element in criticism and proceed from the assumption that an artistic text is closed and neither history, nor the present time, nor the reader, nor the critic can influence it or interact with it. The task of the critic is then reduced to revealing the meaning objectively contained in the artistic text without bringing into the interpretation the spirit of one's own historical period, or the historical experience of the past and present, or the personal taste, life experience, world view and attitudes. The crisis of "precise" methods, disenchantment with their ability to yield definitive and incontrovertible analyses of art works led to the opposite extreme in criticism and methodology which absolutized the subjective element in art criticism. Criticism has come to be regarded as having the parameters of an artistic text. The text in this theory is a semi-processed product which needs to be finished through interpretation and criticism.

The subjective trend was greatly aided by the new theoretical-methodological current, receptive aesthetics. According to that theory, every work realizes itself and becomes socially and artistically complete in the recipient's perception. Every perception has its reason and ideally has to be taken into account in a critical interpretation of a work. Differences in artistic perceptions arise with changes in the historical situation. Every historical period gives its own reading of a work. And every such reading is right in its own way. The new reading does not cancel or make erroneous the previous reading. In accordance with receptive aesthetics, the same period has diverse variants of reading by different reception groups. Every type of audience presupposes its own type of reading of the work. Each such reading is

legitimate and has equal rights with others. Finally, every recipient reads the work in his own way and his interpretation may be different from the interpretations of other members of the same reception group.

Thus, receptive aesthetics posits at least three stages of subjectivity in the reading of an art work: 1) the subjectivism of the historical period; 2) receptive group subjectivism (depending on the type of audience); 3) personal subjectivism (depending on the personal perceptions of the individual). To these three stages of subjectivity some receptive-aesthetic conceptions add a fourth and fifth stage: 4) subjectivism of age (depending on the biological age of the recipient); 5) subjectivism of the mental state (dependence of perception on the mood and frame of mind of the recipient at the moment of perception). A work of art exists only as something perceived and its existence depends only on the recipient – such is the subjectivist extreme of some concepts in receptive aesthetics. These views water down the unity of the objective and the subjective elements in criticism.

It is notable that in the actual practice of criticism the two extremes (absolutized objectivity and absolutized subjectivity) do not only meet but criss-cross. Thus, the "new criticism" which claims to have precise methods and strict objectivity of results often says through the mouths of its adepts that an artistic text needs to be critically and subjectively "completed" if it is to yield its full meaning. The extremes of subjectivity and objectivity do not only flow into each other, but each of them is ambivalent and fraught with dangers (either of subjectivism or rigoristic objectivism), and on the other hand contains a necessary subjective element (the position of the critic) and the necessary objective element (it proceeds from a real artistic text and follows the logic of that text). These polar judgements of the subjectively active book record the ambivalence of the subjective element in criticism.

The above two trends make themselves felt in the practice of art criticism and its reflections on its methodology. On the one hand, there is a considerable body of critical writings espousing the "precise" methods. Wholesale acceptance of "precise" methods banishes the critic's personality from criticism. As a result the criticism of art, which is a sphere of intellectual culture and a truly humanitarian field, is equated with mathematics where 2×2 is always 4 and this result does not depend on the individuality of the person who carries out the operation. Criticism cannot and should not seek a degree of mathematical accuracy when it is removed from the personality of the critic, his life experience, his taste, world outlook and mode of life. The more fervent advocates of structuralism are inclined to reduce all critical

analysis to structural study of the work and to see the operations of structural analysis as complete analogy to the precise methods of mathematics and the sciences. The absolutization of the objectivity of criticism which allegedly uses "precise" methods to achieve the only possible, adequate and final reading of the text, makes the problem of the critic's personality irrelevant to the process of analysis. Criticism is thus removed from the humanities and transferred to the domain of the natural sciences which contradicts the humanitarian nature, goals and functions of criticism, and its inherent and indisputable link with the spirit.

The subjective element in modern criticism takes the positive shape of civic commitment and moral demands on art and the negative shape of subjectivism and license in the interpretation of an artistic text.

The subjectivism of some extreme representatives of receptive aesthetics shows itself in the fact that they believe the recipient's consciousness to be the only instrument in understanding an artistic text. These theorists mistakenly believe that it is impossible to formalize hermeneutic operations or determine the methods of understanding the meaning of an art work because the essence of interpretation is an attitude of mind and not the method. Such subjective views leave the critic without methodological tools and the act of understanding the meaning runs the risk of becoming purely intuitive.

Some modern critics have revealed a tendency to commit subjective violence over an artistic text by turning it into a ground onto which they unleash their personal tastes, inclinations, attitudes and sometimes prejudices. Some critics choose contemporary writers and sometimes even classics as their allies in validating and advancing ideas that otherwise meet with no sympathy among readers and spectators. In such cases the name of a modern writer or classic is used to endorse the muddled and sometimes inhumane ideas of the critic.

Extremes of critical subjectivism in criticism are just as dangerous as the extremes of critical objectivism. Modern criticism does not always strike a balance between subjective and objective elements.

This will be readily seen from the names by which modern critical schools and trends call themselves: "precise", "scientific", "new", "structuralist", "philosophical", "stylistic", "essayistic", "sociological", etc. Many of these adjectives proliferating among schools of criticism reveal their gravitation to the extremes of subjectivism or objectivism.

The absolutization of both the objective and subjective elements fails to take into account the real dialectics of the perception and critical interpretation of an art work. The category of proportion is very important for artistic culture

as a whole. In art only that is beautiful and true which is in moderation. Moderation is important for art criticism too. It must strike a balance between the subjective and objective elements, and a bias in either direction is wrong and unproductive.

The objective factors that ensure certain stability of critical interpretation, relative precision, faithfulness to the text and a mirror reflection of the author's artistic conception include: 1) the programme of artistic experiences and aesthetic orientations, the artistic content of the text; 2) the objective historical inclusion of the text into the socio-cultural context which makes the artistic text a real social phenomenon: a work of art.

The subjective factors behind mobility and variation in the perception of an art work are due to the influence of 1) historical period and its practical and artistic experience; 2) the socio-psychological group to which the reader belongs; 3) his personal qualities; 4) his psychological state at the time of reading; 5) the methods and approaches, instruments and attitudes of the critic.

The dialectics of these objective and subjective elements is such that the reading and evaluation of art works by critics are at once subjective and objective, stable and changeable, invariant and variant, "precise" and polysemantic.

For that reason only a combination of all the rational elements of "precise" and "humanitarian" methods can ensure an all-embracing and comprehensive analysis of an art work corresponding to the tasks, mission and nature of art criticism. In this connection one must draw attention to the emerging trend in modern criticism towards an eclectic approach, a combination of disparate methodological instruments in the analysis of an art work.

While an art work must be approached from different angles if it is to strike a balance between subjectivity and objectivity, such an approach is fraught with dangers. Eclecticism of critical analysis often implies eclecticism of methodology, patchiness of critical thinking, and disparateness of results obtained through the use of different research instruments. That danger can only be overcome by fusing together all the rational elements in contemporary and past critical experience, by combining on the monistic basis of the historical approach everything that "works", all the best and sound elements of traditional and modern methodology. What is needed is a single methodological system of comprehensive critical analysis gathering in all the traditional and new, "precise" and humanitarian, rational and intuitive, interpretational and evaluative approaches.

Such a combination is a guarantee that a true balance will be observed between the objective and subjective elements in criticism.

Critical analysis that strikes a balance between subjectivity and objectivity leaves the art work its openness, presupposes the infiniteness and definiteness of its meaning and proceeds from its significance in the past, present and future, which corresponds to the nature of art.

¹ Unfortunately, this list could be continued with metaphoric epithets and definitions, such as the criticism of "the emotional sob", impressionistic", "a look at nothing", "enthusiastic", "strict", "reinforced concrete", etc.

AESTHETICS: THE THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF ART CRITICISM
**The Science of the Problems Posed by and the Instruments
Used in the Analysis of Art**

AESTHETICS: THE METHODOLOGY OF CRITICISM

The Critical Method and Its Structure

The critical method is the instrument of analyzing art. It is true of course that a critic with polished taste may intuitively identify some essential features of the art work, but not always and not fully.

A truly analytical penetration into the essence of any work, and indeed of any object of inquiry, involves five successive intellectual operations which constitute the scientific method of analysis.

The first operation is anticipation, "choice of initial position", i.e. determining the approach, principles and direction of analysis and its preliminary paradigm (preliminary, anticipated conception of the meaning of the work which may be borne out or refuted by the investigation). This philosophical stage involves a general view of the object in a broad context. Anticipation determines and controls the subsequent thought. The choice of the initial paradigm is determined by the cultural and thought tradition, the previous "thought material" of the given area of knowledge and the social orientation of the investigator.

The second operation is approaching and going round the object, i.e. approaching it to within touching distance, which makes it possible to see it at medium range and in close-up, to look at it at close quarters from different sides and get an idea of the meaning and significance of its external relations.

The third operation is penetration, i.e. moving into the depth of the object by using various methods and operational techniques, cracking its shell, invading it, identifying its structural elements. At that stage the meaning and significance of the inner relationships within the object, its structure, organization and articulation of its elements are revealed.

The fourth operation is understanding the dynamics, i.e. revealing the meaning and significance of the social functioning of the object.

The fifth operation is understanding the essence, i.e. gaining a comprehensive view of the object by summing up, generalizing the results obtained at all the previous stages of analysis. Synthesis takes the investigator back to the general view, but on a new turn of the spiral, with detailed vision of the object and its external and internal structure. The fifth operation leads to concrete-

general judgements about the object.

A convincing argument in favour of the proposed structure of the method is that the methodology in philosophy and individual sciences has evolved through the same stages (philogenesis and ontogenesis coincide). In Ancient Greece methodology was marked by a general undetailed view of the world offered by spontaneous dialectics. Metaphysics absolutized certain approaches and, at a later stage, dissecting operations to reveal the elements of the structure of the world without concerning itself with their living interaction.

Modern dialectical thinking has returned to the overall view of the phenomena supplemented by concrete details and knowledge of their dynamics.

The method of art criticism is determined by five factors: First, by art itself. The method of criticism is an "analogue" of its object, i.e. the literary and art process and its laws, the art work and its characteristics. Generalization of artistic experience proceeds from artistic practice to theory and from theory to methodology, and then to the practice of critical analysis of art.

Second, *the experience of contemporary art* which is relevant to the study of the whole history of art. The present state of art is the key to the analysis of all the preceding forms. Every major discovery in art gives a new impulse to the elaboration of the principles, approaches and methods of critical analysis.

Third, the perception of the object of analysis (art work, art process) is not direct but passes *through the prism of the world outlook* which orients the critic towards certain phenomena, trends and currents in art.

Fourth, *criticism's own tradition*, the "thought material" accumulated by it. Everything of methodological value for the modern stage of criticism must be taken from preceding art criticism.

Fifth, *the methodological experience of other sciences*. For example, the methods of sociological studies can be effectively used to determine the social status and impact of art works, tastes and artistic preferences of the public. Mathematical and statistical methods are usable in the study of the rhythmic organization of a literary text. The experience of linguistics is helpful in the semiotic analysis of an art work.

Three essential questions are asked in determining the methodology of art analysis: *why, what and how* to study in an art work?

The aim (why?) of critical analysis is to influence all the links in the art process: reality – artist – art work – recipient (the public) – reality.

An analysis of an artistic text must cover (what?) the language, style, artistic

conception, artistic impact and aesthetic significance, i.e. *all the semantic and value aspects of the work*. And that is achieved (how?) *through a systematic and comprehensive analysis* of the work.

A key problem of comprehensive analysis is an organic combination of the *value* and *interpretational* approaches, which is achieved through parallel application of the above described five-step method to each of them. The analysis of each of the four value layers of the work "dovetails" with the analogous level of interpretational analysis.

Let us now dwell on each of the five stages of the critical analysis of an art work.

General Judgement of a Work

The method of critical analysis is the type of attitude and principles of reading and evaluation. The first stage is *the choice of initial position* on the basis of the world view which incorporates all the previous thought experience. That experience is superimposed, as it were, on the art work and its previous interpretations to produce a general judgement of the work, a paradigm of reading, and the guidelines for further all-round and detailed analysis.

Before investigating it is necessary to have a rough idea of what it is one needed to investigate. Emile Zola has a character of a doctor who spent a lifetime dissecting dogs but could never find anything because he did not know what to look for. The initial position and paradigm are not of course rigidly fixed for the whole process of analysis. As the analysis proceeds the preliminary findings may necessitate "readjustment" in the original position and paradigm.

The initial premises give the first impulse to the analysis but they are all the time being checked against the results.

From a meeting of the initial position and the artistic text and its previous readings in other critical works there arises the first level of interpretation, i.e. *a general view of the work*, a still undetailed judgement about it, an abstract reading that has not yet involved concrete detail. This leads to the paradigm of the interpretation of the work, the initial type of reading. Further on the general judgement will be concretized and fleshed out with detail and "readjusted" in the process of analysis whose guiding line is the initial position.

The historical approach is the chief interpretational guideline, the general principle of critical analysis determining all approaches and methods, controlling all operations and procedures.

The historical approach demands attention to how a given phenomenon has arisen, what have been the main stages in its development, and what the phenomenon is today. The scientific approach consists not in reducing all the artistic forms to their objective social causes but in deriving the necessity of these forms from the given social relations. The historical approach relies on dialectical thinking and implies a study of phenomena in their development, in their interconnection with other phenomena, and in the light of contemporary experience, i.e. the use of historically higher forms to understand the preceding forms. The historical approach requires that an art work should be seen as a link in the artistic process, as belonging to a certain artistic trend and in comparison with tradition.

Significance for mankind is a value guideline in which the historical approach is reflected. The first interpretational step, the choice of the initial position of analysis, is accompanied by the first evaluation step, the choice of the initial position and shaping of a preliminary general idea of the value of a given work.

Value analysis makes it possible to determine the actual place of a work of art in the national and world art process.

Value criteria are historically changeable: some phenomena in the art of past periods remain unnoticed until a system of values is formed which elevates these phenomena to great prominence.

Determining the value of a work means understanding, through the process of interpretation, of the significance of all its meaningful elements for mankind, revealing the degree of freedom in them.

Determining the Meaning and Value of External Links (Aesthetic Relationships) of an Art Work

Method is a way of considering the meaning and value which ensures a certain approach of the critic to the work and direct contact with it. An art work has many dimensions and sides to it, and it should be contacted from different sides using various approaches.

A scientifically valid approach in art criticism considers the art work from a specific side and the possible number of such approaches is determined by the art work, its properties, relationship and "configuration". The sequence of approaches is governed by the movement from the general to the particular and concrete, i.e. from reality (the sociological and gnoseological approaches) to culture (historical-cultural, comparative-historical approaches), and from culture to the artist, the creative process, the art work and its fate (biographical, creatively genetic approaches).

In addition to "single-contact" approaches which present an art work in close-up, as it were, and reveal only one of its sides, there can be "multiple-contact" approaches which make it possible to cover two or three sides of the art phenomenon and reveal it at medium range.

The historical approach is a guarantee of the monism of methodology. While ensuring an all-round coverage of the object of investigation, the diversity of approaches does not degenerate into methodological pluralism and eclecticism but becomes a factor of all-round analysis due to the control from the philosophical principles and the common sociological nature of such approaches.

Reality is the key to the meaning of an art work, for the latter reflects social reality.

The relevant aspects of the art work are revealed by the *sociological approach* which is not the same as the vulgar sociological approach that reduces all the complexities of artistic processes to economic causes.

The world of art is always a creatively transformed reflection and interpretation of life. For that reason it must be approached *gnoseologically* (determining the degree of truthfulness, correspondence of art to reality). Absolutization of the *gnoseological* approach leads to a primitive view of art as an illustration or slavish copying of reality.

Culture is the key to the interpretation of an art work because the latter arises from a certain cultural tradition and exists, changes and realizes itself socially within its mainstream. It is in the field of culture that the world of artistic ideas and images is expressed, fixed and passed on to other people. It provides a code for reading, assimilating and understanding a work. It is, then, only in the context of culture that a work can realize itself as a social phenomenon. The *historical-culturological approach* proceeds from the conception of an art work as part of the spiritual culture. The *comparative-historical approach* focuses attention on the interrelationships within the same art. The methodological ideas of that approach have been formulated by Veselovsky, a Russian literary scholar (1838-1906). The comparative-historical analysis reveals the main interactions in the art process, the typological similarities of artistic phenomena and similar patterns that link art works with the social reality which has produced them.

So, the historical-cultural approach concerns itself with the interaction of an art work with the broad cultural context, in particular with other arts, while the comparative-historical approach proceeds from the interactions within a certain layer of artistic culture referring to one art and has to do with the

content, thought material, form and artistic language. The typology of artistic interactions provides the theoretical basis for modern historical-cultural and comparative-historical analysis of an art work.

The destinies of the artist and his work also offer clues to its meaning.

An art work is always unique and original, reflecting the personality of its creator. That side of art forms the subject of the *biographical approach* which provides *a method for reading an art work through the personality of the author*.

Victor Hugo believed that writers should be judged not from the point of view of rules and genres which are outside nature and outside art, but according to the immutable laws of every art and the special laws associated with the personality of each author.

Using as his take-off point the aesthetic ideas of the romantics, the French literary scholar Sainte-Beuve developed the biographical approach of which he is considered to be the founder. He was interested in the study of correspondence, conversations, thoughts, character traits, moral qualities, in short, the biographies of great writers.

Tynyanov and Eichenbaum introduced the notion of "literary life" essential for the biographical method. It draws attention to the inter-relationship between artists and their personal qualities and psychology. That tended to bring literary criticism closer to fiction prose. For example, Tynyanov's own studies often developed into novels about poets which presented vivid pictures of literary life.

The personality of the author leaves such a strong imprint on his work that it is usually possible to identify the author from the structure and style of a work.

The second operation, i.e. approaching and going round the art work, is based on the *creative-genetic approach*. To understand the structure of a work one has to know how it was produced. An interpretation of an art work is greatly aided by the history of its creation, the act of composition, the process of writing and all its aspects: psychological (the poet's state of mind, his artistic sensations), textological (variants of the text as recorded in rough drafts), chronological (the time of writing), general circumstances in which the work was written, objectively physical (on what paper and with what kind of pen). The creative-genetic approach is primarily concerned with the story of the creation of a work of art.

Sometimes the artist himself formulates the conception of his work, but even in such a lucky case the investigator has to interpret and sometimes to decipher and correct the author's statement, while the textual and creative

history of a work is a reliable way of revealing its original conception. For example, there are three main drafts of Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe*, four drafts of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and five drafts of Gogol's *The Inspector*. There are almost 900 revisions in *Wit Works Woe*.

Textological analysis compares drafts, rough copies, preparatory notes, etc. to identify the direction in which the author's intention moved, and uses all these materials to interpret the art work.

The above-mentioned second operation reveals *the value of external relationships*, the wealth and originality of the aesthetic relations that have found an artistic expression in the art work.

Investigating the value of the external relationships of the art work is aimed at establishing the degree to which it enriches and expands the artist's aesthetic relation to the world. The value analysis procedure has to do with a comparison of aesthetic relations recorded in the art work against the established "norm" of the period. The supreme criterion is aesthetic wealth.

Determining the Meaning and Value of Internal Relationships (Structure) of the Artistic Text

Method, i.e. the type of interpretational and evaluative operations and devices, ensures penetration into the object of investigation in order to reveal its anatomical structure, dissect the artistic text into elements and study each of them. This is the third operation which includes the operational techniques of structural and stylistic analysis and the devices of microanalysis which give insight into the meaning of the inner structure of the artistic text.

The inner organization of an artistic text has not only a qualitative but also a *quantitative* side, i.e. the rhythmic structure, the frequency of the use of the same words, rhymes and artistic devices.

The quantitative parameters of the art work can be revealed through *statistical methods*. But it can only be scientifically useful if it has a sociological basis.

Only a scientifically rigorous use of mathematical and other "art-metric" methods can yield a positive effect. One would do well to remember that Neumann, an American mathematician, a co-founder of cybernetics, stressed that the science he was engaged in was only a small and very simple part of life. If people do not believe that mathematics is simple, it is only because they are not aware of how complex life is. And, we may add, of how complex art is.

One of the instruments of *operational penetration into the artistic text is structural analysis* which studies the artistic text as an organized set of elements.

Structural analysis is carried out within the framework of the historical principle and is in fact stop-analysis, an operational technique that makes it possible to probe into the structure of the work, investigating it as a system of methods stemming from the overall artistic aim. The possibility of freely changing the parameters and grounds for dividing up the whole into elements renders structural analysis flexible and provides operational scope for the research, makes it possible to "dissect" an artistic text "from various angles" and to penetrate into its structure and reveal its conceptual meaning. In structural investigation the division of a work into components is merely an analytical operation which does not impinge upon the wholeness of the work and does not contradict the principle of all-round artistic perception. Structural analysis presupposes identification of indivisible elements in the object; it considers the whole as a system not reducible to a sum of its elements; it recognizes the capacity of the whole (the system) to change, transform and self-regulate, the capacity to preserve its nature while changing. The main *principles* of structural analysis of an artistic text are: identifying the grounds for division into elements (colour, time or space); the study not of individual elements but the system of their interactions, the whole consisting of elements; synchronic approach, i.e. the study not of the history of the creation of the artistic text but of its structure and its functioning.

An art work is a system which is both closed and open. Structuralism tends to consider the art work as closed while the historical approach tends to consider it as open. So, the dialectics of closedness and openness can only be understood through a combination of the historical (diachronic) and structural (synchronic) approaches. The structural approach is a moment of history like rest is a moment of movement.

Structural analysis, according to some of its opponents, "takes music apart like a corpse", i.e. anatomizes, not studies the living work. There is some truth in that metaphor. And yet several centuries ago doctors and artists (among them was the great Michelangelo) dissected corpses, secretly and at the risk of life, in order to understand the living man. Gogol quoted Pushkin as saying that the task of the critic is *to take part* and *define* an art work.

So, even Pushkin, the author of the formula "he dismembered music as a corpse" which is usually directed against structuralism, was not an opponent of analytical "dismemberment" of an art work.

To be sure an art work is a living organism and structural analysis "deadens" it in a certain sense. But such "deadening" is a necessary stage towards

understanding it fully. Belinsky stressed that reason in its study of art has "only one way and one means, and that is the separation of the idea and form, the division of elements forming a given truth or a given phenomenon. This procedure of reason is by no means a disgusting anatomical process that destroys a beautiful phenomenon to determine its meaning. Reason destroys a phenomenon in order to revive it for itself in its new beauty and new life provided it finds itself in it. The division by reason kills only such phenomena in which reason finds nothing of itself and proclaims them as empirically existing but not real. This process is called 'criticism'."¹. Structural analysis should form *a link in a comprehensive study* which, at one of its stages, of necessity "deadens" the art work only to bring it back to life. This return is effected through *the fourth operation*.

Structural analysis is a component part of the modern scientific methodology which considers the inner organization of an artistic text and reveals the meaning of its structure.

The meaning of linguistic and stylistic structure of the artistic text is revealed through semiotic and stylistic analysis.

Semiotic analysis considers an art work as a sign system and proceeds from the assumption that art is a language. The sign system carries a system of meanings (value) and conveys sense (artistic conception).

One of the basic premises of the semiotic approach reads that an art work is meaningful throughout. The creation of the body-sign is of prime importance. Auxiliary and replaceable elements are reduced to a minimum. One cannot draw an absolute line between the body and meaning in artistic culture.

To understand another's utterance is to orient oneself with regard to it, to put it in a proper place in a proper context. Any understanding is dialogical; it opposes the utterance as a remark opposes a remark in dialogue.

Semiotic analysis is a type of modern linguistic analysis of an art work based on structuralist techniques. That technique presupposes division of characters into opposing protagonist and hero (for example, Tsar Peter and Yevgeni in *The Bronze Horseman* by Pushkin).

Stylistic analysis is based on two main operations: reconstruction of the grammatically normative sentence which lies at the basis of a stylized sentence and revealing the relationship between these two sentences. These relationships contain *the stylistic rules* whereby "ordinary" sentences are turned into stylized ones. The main stylistic rule is that of substitution, replacement of an element of a text by another, presenting the same information in a new "garb".

The "ordinary normative" language which provides a reference point for stylistic analysis is variously denoted as "correct speech", "stylistically unmarked text", "the schoolroom language", etc.).

All these refer to the neutral basis of language from which the individual style of the artist deviates expressing his social attitudes and personal qualities.

The study of the style of work *through its character and the degree of its deviation from "correct" speech* is a concrete application of the principle of hermeneutics: in order that "I" should understand "Another" "a Third" is needed ("the middle term" in Dilthey's terminology). In stylistic analysis these three hermeneutic terms are concretized in the following way: "I" is the critic; "Another" is the stylistically marked text expressive of the individuality of the artist; "a Third" ("the middle term") is the information contained in the stylistically marked text but expressed in stylistically unmarked manner ("schoolroom language"). The following lines from Pushkin may raise a few eyebrows:

*I don't like Russian speech
Without a grammar mistake,
It is like rosy cheeks without a smile.*

But the fact is that Pushkin here refers to artistically stylized speech, i.e. speech deviating in some way from the grammatical norm. Style is always an "error" with regard to "normal" ordinary speech.

Evaluating the inner organization of an art work, determining the value of its inner links means above all revealing the wealth of its intonational system, i.e. the intonational analysis of the art work.

The aesthetic experience is expressed in intonation which is an instrument of collective human consciousness. *Intonation is a means affixing and transmitting thought, a substantive element of the information process, an active vehicle of the experience of relations concentration of emotionally charged thought.* Intonation – audial and motor (gesture, mime) – plays an important role in any branch of art.

Intonation lies on the border between aesthetic feeling and artistic thought shaped in images. Intonational analysis compares the intonation system of the art work with the intonation stock of the period. The comparison reveals the degree of intonation freedom and determines the value of the intonation system of the art work.

The criterion of value is the intonational wealth of the artistic text, its emotional tautness, logical and semantic content.

Determining the value of inner relationships within an art work also involves

revealing the degree to which it enriches the artistic norms and poetic craftsmanship of the author. Expansion of the artistic norms enriches and develops the emotional and semantic field and conceptual range of art. The latter tends to enhance the value potential of art and stimulate progress in art. So, the third stage of analysis determines *the value of inner relationships within an art work* as indicated by the value of the artistic norms reflecting the author's craftsmanship.

Determining the Sense and Value of an Art Work in the Light of its Social Functioning

In the functional approach the investigator's attention shifts from the art work as an art object to its social aspect. The artistic message and value of the work are revealed through its actual functioning in culture. This research proceeds in two directions: sociological and receptive and aesthetic.

The receptive approach tries to understand the work through the series of concrete historical, group and individual perceptions of it.

This approach has brought the receptive aesthetic studies closer to hermeneutics. Hermeneutics historically appeared as a methodology of the interpretation of the works of art through the actualization of the cultural tradition in them. In the reception theory approach, it is not the artistic text as such, nor the author as a creative personality but the historical and functional destiny of the art work that provides the take-off point for revealing the artistic value and message.

Receptive analysis considers the artistic characteristics of a work against a historical background, as open to different perceptions by different generations of readers at different historical periods. In traditional aesthetics the artistic essence of an art work was identified with the impulses it gives to the perception of the interpreter while the field of perception was confined to the recipient's standpoint. Perception was thought of in terms of points in space and not in terms of space. The artistic significance was therefore identified with the art work and its substantive form.

Traditional aesthetics of Enlightenment concerned itself only with the relationship between the writer and the ideal reader. In such an approach the perception of an art work was a purely psychological problem. The writer and the reader were two individuals isolated in time and space who were to be involved in an act of aesthetic and spiritual communication. It was assumed that communication was possible not with any reader but only with a reader whose spiritual level and education matched that of the writer. The real fate

of the books was beyond the purview of aesthetics and they were not perceived as vehicles for dialogue between author and recipient.

The traditional Enlightenment and Romantic conception of the author as the "creator" of a book as an immanent value and of the reader as an ideal recipient obscures the real, concrete-historical relationships involved in the artistic process.

For many years, aesthetics dealt with the history of the creation of art works, with the creative process and the problems of realizing the conception. Now aesthetics is confronted with other challenges: the study of the perception and consumption of an art work by the public and the public's artistic demands and estimates, the study of the functioning of an art work in the social system and the mechanisms of value and artistic assessment of the work by the public.

The reader (listener, spectator) has to be theoretically treated not as a passive object of artistic influence but as a "productive consumer" who has been transferred from the consumption to the creative sphere. The aesthetic experience is part of social cognition and action. An art work is not something frozen, unmobile and dead.

An art work is a complex system of relations between author and addressee which takes place within the context of culture.

Hermeneutics interprets the art work as a phenomenon of culture.

Modern hermeneutics is particularly concerned with the typology of perception (Gauss) and the inner orientation of art works (Iser).

It is important for aesthetics to overcome the empirical isolation of interpretations from one another and to grasp the general laws of interpretation hidden behind the psychological and individual situative attitudes to art. Perception is a historically determinate entity which has historically successive forms of attitudes to the art work. It is important to approach the perception of art in a historically differentiated way and to expand the frontiers of theoretical study of the interaction between man and the products of artistic culture. New conceptions of interpretation of art works go beyond the framework of psychology and consider culturological aspects of the perception of art.

Art critics must take into account both sides in the "text – recipient" relationship: the influence of the text due to its artistic significance and the reader's reception which depends on his individuality and the concrete historical circumstances. One can talk therefore of two levels in the study of an art work, i.e. the inner artistic and the historical.

Aesthetics from the time of antiquity to our own day has mainly addressed itself to the process of the creation of an art work while leaving it to psychology and other areas of knowledge to study perception, which was not considered to be a problem for aesthetics.

Thus aesthetics ignored the dynamics of human subjectivity, i.e. the most essential factor for art and for aesthetic experience.

That gap is now filled in the theory of aesthetics by a department called "aesthetics as the theory of artistic perception (receptive aesthetics)"; the receptive approach can help methodology to gain deeper insight into the meaning and value of an art work.

Sociological studies allow to reveal the picture of the social functioning of an art work, to define the social strata in which it has an impact and to describe the reception preferences and orientations of the public. The strength of the impact on the reader (spectator, listener) and the following of a work commands in different social strata can be measured. Sociological studies and statistics help towards a more general picture of these processes.

Analysis must perceive the change in the social weight of the art work, its sense and meaning, its axiological focus and dominant functional feature, for all this is relevant not to the inner organization of the art work but to its *social existence*.

An art work is a living organism born of a host of spiritual factors.

In the course of analysis the scholar looks at various layers of the art work and the methodology of analysis changes drastically depending on whether the emphasis is on the wholeness or divisibility of the art work, on the elements or on the interaction between parts and the whole and between parts. These different avenues of research have been differently pursued in different schools of art criticism.

Intuitivism is inclined to emphasize the wholeness of the work.

Formalism, positivism, neopositivism and structuralism gravitate towards the second type. The third approach is to varying degrees favoured by the cultural-historical school, comparativism and sociologism.

The complex, multi-layered nature of the art work and the artistic process are most fully revealed when *the cultural field is used as the operational instrument of analysis*. The methodology which includes the category of the field as its instrument approaches art as a spiritual-practical process. Taking into account the criss-crossing and superimposition of different cultural fields on one another, the researcher can recreate a wide picture of the interactions of an art work and encompass its real life in all its shifting relationships: with the

author, the creative process, the environment, other artistic phenomena, and with society.

There exists a whole range of interacting fields in which the art work realizes itself and through which it must be interpreted.

The semiotic field makes it possible to understand the system of signs and to decipher their meaning. It is formed of the language culture and the natural and conventional languages and habits of their application and understanding.

The socio-historical field creates the tension which holds and reveals the socio-semantic meaning of the art work. That field is formed of political ideas and institutions, the forms of everyday and state life; it makes it possible to understand the social reasons for and the social load of the work.

The field of culture makes it possible to see the art work within the cultural tradition and enables a person versed in that culture to understand and interpret the text.

The field of a concrete branch of art, i.e. the artistic tradition proper, gives insight into all the shades of the meaning of an art work as a fact of art.

The field of public opinion makes it possible to understand the social status of the work, its place in the hierarchy of art values.

This field is formed by art criticism and by the word-of-mouth "publicity" surrounding a work of art.

The field of the author's creative work gives an insight into the artistic conception of the work in the context of the views of the author expressed in the whole of his artistic legacy. That field is formed of the interaction of the given work with the entire body of the author's work.

The ontological approach considers the work in terms of the history of its existence in society. The circumstances of the social realization of an art work are capable of shedding new light on its meaning.

When exposed to new life and art experience the work acquires new qualities. Every new generation reads it with a "fresh, contemporary eye". The fact that there exist different readings of an art work is due to the influence of world view on perception and interpretation and reveals its historical changeability: its artistic value may wax and wane depending on the social and cultural environment in which the work lives. The value focus of the art work may change, its entire axiological structure may change as a result of which it should be analyzed along different lines in a new historical period. Even the meaning of the work is changeable, although within certain limits.

In a new historical period an art work lives a new life, it has different time

and internal associations and relates differently to the cultural field. As soon as the value focus and the dominant function of the work shift under the impact of a new historical-cultural field, the whole system of layers has to be viewed from a different angle. As a result the significance of an art work changes. The value of a great work grows both artistically and conceptually. The social existence of a work takes place through publication, interaction with the audience, public opinion, and its interpretation by critics. These factors determine the social status and ontology of the masterpiece. In turn, the history of the public "reputation" of a work, its treatment by the critics, the public attention and perception of it are far from irrelevant for the reading of a masterpiece, and provide one of the clues to its modern interpretation.

Final Judgement of the Meaning and Value of an Art Work

The fifth operation of analysis – getting down to the essence – is achieved through an all-round view of the object, the use of the instruments of synthesis, the technology of generalization which realize the original conception and bring into a system the results of the analysis of external and internal relationships of an art work and its functioning. Here method is a definite type of synthesizing procedures and the technology of generalization. As a result of these procedures a generalized theoretical vision of the object is formed which is enriched by the knowledge of details extracted in the process of the second, third and fourth mental operations. There emerges an all-round view of the work, the final judgement about its artistic conception, i.e. concrete general judgement which yields a comprehensive idea of the meaning of the work.

Critical analysis of a work as a whole involves a synthesis of the results yielded by its comprehensive study. The historical approach which marks the whole process of analysis brings all the aspects of the analysis into the focus of *a single and comprehensive interpretation*. Only a methodology that is at once many-sided and "united" by a single historical view can result in a synthesis of diverse points of view (approaches) on the work, their merger into a single interpretation, a comprehensive analysis.

One aspect of the comprehensive analysis is *evaluation of the artistic conception, revealing its richness and originality*. The artistic conception brings together the qualities that determine the value status of a work. It contains the value nucleus of the work which draws on all the previous value layers.

The fifth operation of critical analysis reveals the expansion of the area of freedom in the conceptual mastering of life and determines the "increment" of ideas by comparing them with the ideas current at the time the work was

created. The value of the conception of the work and its correspondence to concrete-historical and universal human social tasks are thus determined. The supreme criterion of the concluding stage of value analysis – artistic perfection, a masterpiece of art – is a socially significant conception of an art work that is masterfully expressed on the basis of enriched norms of art, meeting the fundamental needs of society in the shaping of a socialized and independent creative individual.

The five stages of value analysis of the art work (value position; considering the value of the aesthetic relationship between the art work and reality; revealing the value of the inner structure of the artistic text; showing the value of the social functioning of a work and, finally, determining the value of the artistic conception) directly correspond to the five stages of the interpretational analysis (the world view position, semantics of the work's external relationships; semantics of internal relationships of the artistic text; the meaning of the work in the light of its social functioning, the meaning of the art conception).

The synthesis of the results of four stages of value analysis produces the final general assessment of the art work (its value status is determined).

The value of a work is a sum total of all the components, and the general value judgement about it is the result of the generalization of what has been established by all the evaluative analytical operations in the course of the investigation.

The problem of the artistic value of a work of art takes on great aesthetic, practical and philosophical significance in the present dynamic world which is full of social drama and in which the question of the meaning of life itself is very acute.

¹ V.G. Belinsky, *Complete Works*, Vol. 6, p. 270 (in Russian).

CONCLUSION

Theoretical and Practical Conclusions from the Study of Problems in Aesthetics

AESTHETICS: THE PHILOSOPHY OF AESTHETIC AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITY (THE SCIENCE OF THE LAWS OF AESTHETIC AND ARTISTIC MASTERING OF THE WORLD)

Understanding the basic laws of the object is both the goal and theoretical result of scientific investigation. The result constitutes its philosophical aspect. Aesthetics is a theoretical and methodological discipline, one of the philosophical sciences. But it too has a generalizing, final department which considers *the general laws of aesthetic and artistic activity*, and offers *typology of aesthetic categories*. What are the laws of aesthetics and what is its apparatus of categories which makes it possible to understand these laws? The main aesthetic categories have been described in some detail in the preceding discourse.

Now, by way of summing up, let us try to bring them *into a system*: to identify the main *types*, determine the nature of the relationship between them, and the place of the concepts coextensive with them bearing in mind that there are no watertight partitions between aesthetic concepts and categories and that they can be transformed into one another.

Types of aesthetic categories. Every type of category is at the same time the apparatus of a type of analysis of an aesthetic phenomenon, an art work or the artistic process.

The contemporary system of aesthetic categories includes the following types: *Metacategory* (aesthetic).

Categories of aesthetic activity (the laws of beauty, aesthetic mastering, design, artistic design, aesthetic orientation, taste, ideal, balance) provide the apparatus for the analysis of the aesthetic mastering of the world.

Categories of aesthetic qualities and the relationship between art and reality (the beautiful, the sublime, the tragic, the comic, the ugly and the base) provide the apparatus for the analysis of the aesthetic wealth of reality and art.

Categories of the gnoseology of art (artistic image, method, artistic verity, artistic conception) provide the apparatus for gnoseological analysis which reveals the character of the correspondence of art to reality.

Categories of the sociology of art (class, party, national character, ideological character, the national, the international, the universally human) provide the

apparatus for sociological analysis.

Categories of the axiology of art (aesthetic idea, value, artistic quality, masterpiece) provide the apparatus for value analysis.

Categories of the ontology of art (work of art, classic, mass and elitist art, style) provide the apparatus for ontological and stylistic analysis.

Categories of the theoretical history of art (artistic process, trend, interactions within art: tradition, rejection, influence; progress in art) provide the apparatus for comparative analysis.

Categories of the anthropology of art (artist, stages of artistic work, artistic career, life in art) provide the apparatus for biographical analysis.

Categories of the creative genetics of art (conception, sketch, rough draft, variant) provide the apparatus for creative-genetic and textological analysis.

Categories of the psychology of art (ability, talent, genius, inspiration, creative fantasy, artistic imagination) provide the apparatus for psychological analysis of art.

Categories of perception of art (artistic pleasure, artistic perception, catharsis, "the level of expectancy") provide the apparatus for reception analysis.

Categories of the morphology of art (branches: literature, theatre, cinema, painting, etc.; kinds: epic, lyrical poetry, drama, easel painting, monumental painting, etc.; genres: in literature, novel, story, novella, poem, lyrical poem, same in other arts) provide the apparatus for interbranch and historical and cultural analysis.

Categories of the structure of art (art text, context, time, space and colour in art) provide the apparatus for structural analysis.

Categories of the theory of artistic communication and the semiotics of art (addressee, sender, sign, meta-sign, code, artistic communication, intonation) provide the apparatus for semiotic, communicative and intonational analysis.

Categories of the theory and methodology of art criticism (interpretation, evaluation, artistic status of a work; approaches: sociological, concrete-historical, comparative, biographical, creative-genetic, structural analysis, microanalysis, attentive reading) provide the apparatus for critical analysis of an art work.

Categories of aesthetic education (all-round development of the individual, spiritual wealth, aesthetic interests and requirements of the individual) provide the apparatus for the analysis of the aesthetic impact of art.

Categories of the theory and practice of administering artistic culture (engagement, patronage, social order, bonus) provide the apparatus for the analysis of art

policy.

The categoric apparatus of aesthetics is enlarged, first by fixing the results of theoretical description of artistic phenomena and processes (for example, the categories of realism, romanticism, sentimentalism); second, by borrowing terms from other fields of culture. Thus the rhetorical term-the sublime-in time acquired a general aesthetical meaning; philosophy has provided such categories as method (artistic), conception (artistic), psychology, the category of perception (artistic); third, by expanding the usage of terms of art criticism: from the cinema, aesthetics has borrowed the concepts of montage and long, medium and close-up shots; from musicology, the concepts of intonation, rhythm, melody and polyphony; from painting, colour, etc.; fourth, as a result of interaction and synthesis of traditional categories (for example, the tragicomic); fifth, by drawing on the tradition of theoretical interpretation of artistic phenomena existing among different peoples; sixth, by correct use of the categories of new scientific disciplines (structuralism, semiotics, the theory of mass communications, scientology, axiology, hermeneutics, etc.).

The expansion of the categories available to aesthetics makes it possible to understand art in all its complexity and diversity and to give a more precise and flexible formulation of the laws of aesthetic and artistic mastering of the world.

Art is simultaneously a form of social consciousness and a type of aesthetic activity, a specific sphere of aesthetic activity. Accordingly, it is governed not only by the laws common to all forms of social consciousness (it depends on economics, possesses a relative autonomy, is socially and historically conditioned in its evolution, exerts an active reciprocal influence on reality) but also by the meta-laws of aesthetics and the specific laws of artistic activity proper.

The last two groups of laws, revealing the essential and necessary relationships arising in the process of aesthetic activity and artistic creation, social existence, perception and development of art come within the sphere of aesthetics.

The meta-laws of aesthetic activity characterize the essence of the process of aesthetic mastering of the world. They are as follows: 1) The aesthetic qualities of reality arise because man in the process of his activity includes the phenomena of the world within the sphere of his practice and invests them with a certain value relationship to mankind; the degree to which man has mastered these phenomena at a given historical period and the degree of his freedom are revealed.

2) Aesthetic activity a) is carried out in accordance with the inner measure of the object and the ideals of man; b) seeks to create an in transient universally human value; c) has an anti-alienating social effect inasmuch as the result of artistic creation is the sphere of freedom of the creative artist and the consumer of the aesthetic product.

The highest form of aesthetic mastering of the world is art which, in addition to the meta-laws, has its own specific laws. Among these are the laws of artistic creation, social existence of art, artistic perception and artistic process.

The laws of artistic creation reveal essential and necessary relationships of the "genetics", "anthropology" and gnoseology of art.

Artistic creation a) is carried out by an artistically gifted individual or collective; b) on the basis of a certain artistic method; c) takes the form of image thinking; d) in the process of creation a unique and original artistic world is created, which e) reflects reality and the personality of the author.

The laws of the social existence of art reveal the essential and necessary morphological, semiotic and communicative relationships pertaining to the ontology and sociology of art.

1) The form of the existence of art is a) an art work which b) is determinate in terms of type, genus and genre, and style; c) is realized in a material object (sign) which, in the field of culture and artistic tradition and in the field of public opinion shows its communicative qualities and conveys to people a certain conception possessing aesthetic value.

2) Art a) is humanistically oriented; distortion of the humanistic orientation of art distorts and destroys its nature; b) seeks through its hedonistic function (artistic pleasure) to assert the individual and his intrinsic value, and c) to socialize man (foster socially significant qualities in him) through its cognitive, educational and aesthetic functions.

The laws of artistic perception reveal the essential and necessary relationships of art appreciation. The process of perception of art a) is private, intimate, takes place in the depth of man's consciousness, is creatively active (the recipient is a co-author, co-creator, performer of the art work for himself); b) includes an interpretation and evaluation of the work depending on the reception group to which the person belongs and in keeping with his personal experience of culture; c) the "spread" of interpretations and evaluations of a work depends on its accessibility in terms of reception, to different historical periods and groups of readers (spectators, listeners); the limits of the spread are set by the invariant, stable programme of artistic perception built into the art work; d) gives aesthetic pleasure which stimulates the creative activity of perception; e)

the intensity of aesthetic delight depends on the orderliness and complexity of the structure of the art work.

The laws of the artistic process reveal the essential and necessary relationships of the dialectics of art with the historical development of mankind's artistic culture. The artistic process a) is carried out through the emergence and struggle of different art trends, b) through typologically different intra- and international artistic contacts at the level of individual authors, art trends and schools and entire art periods and cultures; c) follows the way of progress which means passing to more developed types of artistic thought, enriching the structure of works and adding new cultural-stylistic layers to them; d) at the same time, preserves the intransient significance of earlier values which remain the eternal companions and contemporaries of people at all historical periods; e) artistic consciousness corresponds to historically concrete forms of the individual's activity, his type and mode of life.

AESTHETICS: THE THEORY OF AESTHETIC EDUCATION (HUMANISM: THE SUPREME GOAL AND MEANING OF AESTHETICS AND ART

Aesthetic education is aimed at shaping an all-round creative individual, embracing the intellectual, emotional, volitional and value-orientation sides of the individual. It permeates all the spheres of man's activity, i.e. the depth of his thinking, the refinement of feelings, the selectivity, and the initial assumptions. Aesthetic education imparts aesthetic knowledge. *It is all-embracing and shapes not only the mind but the character of a person.* In the process of aesthetic education aesthetics is not only assimilated by a man as a body of knowledge but becomes part of his personality. The individual is moulded by the combined influence of: 1) aesthetic theory; 2) nature and society; 3) works of art; 4) aesthetic activity which covers the perception of the first three components (aesthetic and artistic values), and creative activity according to the laws of beauty.

Aesthetic education presupposes a unity of the individual's aesthetic beliefs and his intuitive orientations and self-manifestations in all forms of activity. And that requires not only aesthetic training but also enlightenment, conviction and polished character. The particular value of aesthetic education stems from the fact that it assists self-knowledge and self-development of the individual, and is the highest form in which man communicates with humanity, the highest form of the socialization of man.

The strong point of aesthetic education is its freedom from didacticism. Influence on the individual is not geared to selfish purposes and is exerted unobtrusively and without pressure. The goals of aesthetic education are so broad that direct utility is absent, while the process has broad social significance.

While moral education aims to endow a person with social qualities desirable in a given society, aesthetic education has in mind not only the given society but, in the final count, the whole mankind as the field and the criterion for the life activity of the individual. Aesthetic education develops a person's creative abilities and teaches him to take a truly humane attitude to the world. This guarantees the present relevance and future expansion of the sphere and significance of aesthetic education.

Aesthetic education polishes *the aesthetic part of consciousness*, i.e. aesthetic taste, value orientations, ideals, attitudes and criteria, but in fact the individual as a whole comes under its influence. The desired result of aesthetic education is an all-round, harmonious, intrinsically and socially valuable creative individual possessing a high level of individual aesthetic culture which enables the person to live a humane life and to act with conviction and purpose, selectively, productively, practically and relevantly in universally human terms. The only indicator of the level of aesthetic education of the individual is his creative individual actions, their humane character, a noble kind of behaviour, manners and appearance, matched with a developed taste.

Art is the nucleus and chief instrument of aesthetic education, which also includes design, aesthetic aspects of sport and other forms of activity carrying an aesthetic element.

A specific aspect of aesthetic education is *the hedonistic effect*: the personality is formed through the experience of aesthetic pleasure, which makes the process spontaneous and joyful. Aesthetic education takes place in "a play situation": a person's thoughts and feelings are polished in a situation of selflessness, the process involves a vigorous inner work of the consciousness. The person is not expected to act immediately in a certain way under given conditions; aesthetic education prepares him for life and for behaving in a wide range of future real situations.

Along the way aesthetic education plays a *compensatory* role by distracting a person from sad life experiences and preparing him to struggle for a better world and for improving his position in it. It also has *an enlightenment-heuristic* value helping the individual to enrich himself with new knowledge

and aesthetic experience. Other functional features of aesthetic education are: *artistic quality*: polishing the sensibilities, tastes, appearance and behaviour; *value orientation effect*: developing the habit of evaluating life and artistic phenomena, arranging a hierarchy of values and choosing a direction of activity in accordance with that hierarchy; *creativity*: awakening the artist in man, developing the need and capacity for creative perception of the world and art, and for creative activity.

Art in the 20th century has advanced the concept of a constantly growing man. But the directions and results of such growth can be controversial.

Shellig, the American science fiction writer, in his story "Wonder Kid" forecasts a continuous and fast growth of an individual that leads to gruesome results. Dr. Elliot in that story has invented a biological and mental growth stimulator which he offers to his friends to test on their child: the child would develop rapidly, which would save a lot of trouble to parents. The offer is accepted. The results are fabulous: at the age of six weeks the child can feed itself and talk, and at the age of two years it reads books. At last Dr. Elliot reveals the true "advantages" the wonder kid has and the benefits of his fast growth. It is to develop egotism and cruelty, the only way for a child to survive in the conditions of tough competition which tends to grow a thousand times tougher.

But the six-year-old child, who grows up as a competitive egoist, is increasingly alienated from other people. Such are the results of the continuous growth of the individual if that growth is not illuminated by humanistic ideas, if the person is focused on himself and has no goals in society outside himself. An accelerated and continuous development of character on an egoistic basis ends in utter degradation of the human elements in man. Man must give himself to other people and be necessary to other people; otherwise the egotistic isolation deprives life of meaning, makes it absurd.

The growth of the individual outside its humanistic value and the growth of society contrary to the interests of the individual are equally unprogressive in their essence. A beautiful type of man can only be formed in a society based on truly humanistic foundations.

However, humanism has not fared well in history, as symbolized by the story of the little shepherd in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. The master whipped the boy for the slightest misdemeanour. Don Quixote, a noble seeker after justice, intervenes on the side of the poor boy and threatens to make short shrift of the master if he continued to be unjust and cruel. But as soon as the knight rode

away, the master gave the little shepherd an even sounder battering than before. When the knight returned to those parts the boy begged him not to step in for him. The search for good turned out to bring more evil. Perhaps it is true that violence should not be resisted by violence? Or perhaps Don Quixote's methods of resisting violence were wrong?

Social, scientific and technical progress are vector values, i.e. they always have a direction. Throughout the history of mankind every technical breakthrough has brought not only benefits but also misfortunes to men. Schwarz, a medieval monk, invented a powder for fireworks. But the powder became a means of destruction and killing. The electric magneto with the help of which neofascist "ultras" tortured people is as much a child of technological progress as the refrigerator. The atomic blast in Hiroshima was also a result of technological progress. There is no true progress of society without humanism, and there is no true humanism without progress of society.

What then is the role of art in the present world?

Dostoyevsky in his time proclaimed that "beauty will save the world". But why has it not yet done so? Have there been not enough art masterpieces in the history of mankind? After the publication of *Gulliver's Travels* Swift expected the world to reform, to be rid of evil and injustice.

And the great satirist was chagrined that ten years after the publication of his novel the world still did not mend its ways. What grounds are there for believing in the social effectiveness of art if the experience of history is so sad?

Gogol's *Government Inspector* did not eliminate bribe-takers and bureaucrats.

Shakespeare did not rid the world of Jago, Pushkin of Salieri, or Moliere of

misanthropes and hypocrites. Gleb Uspensky told the story of how Venus

helped a downtrodden man crippled by life to rise. But how many people

have remained crippled and crushed in the same world where there are

Venus and Raphael's *Sistine Madonna*. Many fascist guards at concentration

camps were lovers of music and even organized bands of prisoner musicians.

The musicians brought beauty to the overseers and the overseers brought

death to the musicians. It was not music but the force of arms and the heroism of men and women that saved the world from the "brown plague".

Beauty and art is just one of the many forces at work in society. Beauty is capable of "saving the world" but only if the socially destructive actions of other forces do not nip in the bud everything that creates art.

Art fulfils its social role most effectively when the entire social, scientific and technological progress is directed towards asserting harmony between man and humanity, i.e. in a sense serves the goals of beauty. The supreme aim of

science is to give people knowledge. The supreme aim of technology is to use the knowledge obtained by science to satisfy the material and cultural requirements and interests of people. The supreme goal of art is *all-round development of a socially significant and intrinsically valuable individual*.

That is why art is capable of spiritualizing scientific and technological progress, of illuminating it with the ideals of humanism.

Harmony between the individual and society is in principle possible: where social progress ensures the happiness of the individual and where the individual is free of egoistic isolation every step forward need not turn out to be a new unfreedom. *Man develops and improves through society, in the name of other people, and society develops through man and in the name of the individual.*

This is the dialectics of man and humanity and the essence of history. The all-round development of the individual, the individual's harmony with society and humanity is the supreme humane mission of art.

THE END